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The American University in Cairo

School of Business, Economics, and Mass Communication

**THE ROLE OF EGYPTIAN FILM IN STEREOTYPING SINGLE
WOMEN**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

by

Heba Metwally Ibrahim Metwally
Bachelor of Arts

Under the supervision of Dr. Ibrahim M. Saleh

December/2007

The American University in Cairo

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Abstract

Due to the increasing rates of single or still-unmarried women, also known as spinsters or *Awanes*, shaping the perceptions of these women is a problem facing Egyptian society. In this paper, the researcher assesses the effects of the media's depiction of these women, specifically focusing on the movie industry. By conducting a content analysis of Egyptian movies, as well as an examination of the notion of spinsters in language, history and culture, this study demonstrates the impact of movies in constructing a negative image and shaping the perception of unmarried women within Egyptian society. Through in-depth interviews, field observation in rural Egypt, this study aims to measure how people differ in their perception of spinsters through demographics such as gender, location, religion, age, educational level, occupation, social and economic status. It will be argued that the problem lies in the word "spinster" or *anas* itself, which is commonly defined as an insulting or derogatory word in linguistic definitions as well as in everyday conversations, and which has a negative psychological effect on single or unmarried women. This word constructs a problematic social reality in Egypt, and what is needed is a new social reality, which affirms that single women have a positive and meaningful role in society, and in which she is not defined by her marital status.

We need to change, to develop, to believe in empathy, face our problems to realize our progress. The following quotes are aspects of change¹:

"They always say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."

- Andy Warhol

"It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the most responsive to change."

- Charles Darwin

¹ <http://creatingminds.org/quotes/change.htm>

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In the Name of Allah the most Compassionate the most Merciful

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Ragaa Montaser, and to the soul of my father who is a martyr in October's War liberating our country from the Zionist Expansion. Since his death my mother has sacrificed herself with every minute of her life, fulfilling my father's dearest wish to provide his child with the highest level of education. I will forever be grateful for your support mother.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the Egyptian society, as well as in other Arab/Islamic countries, marriage is a crucial social issue. The three main monotheist religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which lay the foundation of social values here, make marriage lawful and prohibit *Zena* or adultery. In fact, marriage is the only 'legitimate' way to allow a man and a woman to live together, and is often described as the 'natural' state of being. At the same time, *onousa*² or spinsterhood is a phenomenon that is considered a problem within Egyptian society, and one that is becoming a chronic syndrome within the Arab/Islamic world. Also known as 'singleness' or the state of being unmarried, (American Heritage Dictionary, 1992), people often limit the problem to being a woman's issue while 'Bachelorhood' or *El Ozoubia*,³ is considered un-problematic in these patriarchal societies. The connotation of *Azeb* is not attached to any unjust depiction or form any kind of pressure on man.

Arab/Islamic societies, including Egyptian society, place tremendous pressure on women to get married, by labeling them as *awanes* or spinsters if they do not marry early. In a book titled, *Studies of Woman and Man in the Arab Society*, Nawal El Saadawy (1990) says:

...It is difficult for women to decide between being married or not because, socially, marriage is the only accepted destiny for her. Women should marry otherwise society will not accept or respect them. Even if one attains the highest academic degrees or reaches the highest positions at work, if she remains unmarried that means that there is deficiency in her. (pp. 267-268).

Societal pressures are becoming a burden, pressuring women to marry and stay at home. Imposing a negative stereotype – a frame - on single women keeps them in their traditional role, which emphasizes that staying home and being cared for is better than being single and working because it will eventually lead to spinsterhood or *onousa*.

² In the context of this study, *onousa*, or spinsterhood should be distinguished from *onousa* which means femininity. Although the pronunciation of both in English is the same, they differ in the Arabic pronunciation. Usually the former term refers to females.

³ *El ozoubia* or bachelorhood is a similar phenomenon to the *onousa* that may be considered a problem of being unmarried regarding males. Unmarried man is labeled as *azeb*. *Ozab* is the plural. Oxford and the American Heritage dictionaries define the word bachelor as an unmarried man.

Sadly, notions of discrimination and double standards are still prevalent throughout the world. We are dependent on social norms that remain unquestioned, even though these may contradict the spiritual texts that are foundational to our social system. Referring to the Quran in Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah Taala says,

[Satan] commands you only what is evil and sinful, and that you should say against Allah what you know not. When it is said to them follow what Allah has sent down." They say, "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following." (Would they do that!) Even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided?" (Al Hilali and Khan, Interpretation of Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 169 & 170).

Yet, unfortunately, this is exactly what is happening with ideas surrounding singlehood. People's mentalities are still affected by traditional ideas that evoke backwardness. Although all the Abrahamic religions, especially Christianity and Islam respect the virgins because they take Virgin Mary, Mother of the Prophet Jesus Christ, Peace Be Upon Him, as a role model, the culture does not respect single, still-unmarried women, considering them to be fallow, barren or *bayera*⁴, an unjust description that portrays women as unwanted.

The increase in 'spinsterhood' rates in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and many other Arab/Islamic countries, has, of course, captured the interest of the media. As the media offers us a reflection of society, demonstrating common cultural behaviors and belief systems and reinforcing them, it represents the vacuum that society suffers from. In comedies and dramas, single, still-unmarried women are portrayed scornfully as spinsters to be ridiculed and ostracized, while their male counterparts are not. This conflation of female singleness with weakness and negativity demonstrates two important things: first, woman's inequality in comparison to man, and second, the key role that the media plays in portraying stereotypes within society.

⁴ *Bayera* is an Arabic word derived from *Bor*, according to Alias Modern Arabic English Dictionary (1986), is usually used to describe a land by, that is to say, that this land is fallow or barren. *Bor* according to Alias Modern Dictionary (1986). Also, in El Wagiz Arabic – Arabic Dictionary (1994), *Bayera* is from the verb *Bar*, and *bar* means destroyed or perished, and usually describe land with it (if no one cultivate it) or work (if it did not achieve the required goals from it).

The media is incredibly powerful in shaping people's perceptions, because people usually trust what they hear from the media regardless of the sources. It is evident through this study that the society and the media exert a pressuring influence on single women; instead of helping them to "keep themselves chaste, until Allah enriches them of His Bounty" (Al Hilali and Khan, 1994, pp. 543), the Egyptian society and media compel them - particularly single women who are beyond 25 or 30 years old - to rush to get married, which is often an undesirable behavior to others, especially men. Moreover, because of their haste to be married, many women end up in unsuitable partnerships just to be free from the pressure of friends, family and society.

Thus, there is an urgent need to re-consider the current social condition concerning its perceptions of women as fallow or *bayera* and spinster or *anas*, that women who are divorced should have a bad reputation, and that women who do not have children are sterile. It is crucial to change our ways of thinking to be more productive, loving, and supportive of one another, to come together to restore the good things from religion and culture and eradicate stagnant beliefs.

If we compare the problem of perception in Arab societies to the perception of singleness in the West... we will see how that has become less negative in the West with women's increasing education and work and through the feminist movements who are strong and active comparing to the feminist movements here in Egypt, a topic that needs further research later. Rachel Yordy, a Canadian child rights research associate, working in Egypt with Mennonite Economic Development Associates, an NGO, states,

The perception of singleness is changing in the West... a woman is not a spinster if she is 25 and not married... and there is not the same kind of pressure... though there is some pressure, and our media similarly reinforce the idea that you need a partner to be whole, which I think is a huge problem. It's true that in Western pop-culture there is the perception that everyone is having sex before marriage, but this is also not true – those who come from a religious orientation have moral rules that prohibit this as well... many of my closest friends waited until married to have sex because of their spiritual beliefs. (Personal Communication, November 3, 2007).

Over all, there has been a change in ideas surrounding sex, as the introductory quote suggests. However, women, in Egypt, do not have to embrace a free-sex culture (like the quote) to develop a more positive attitude towards singleness. Egyptian solutions for an Egyptian challenge – the development of a ‘new’ working/educated woman brings the need for a ‘new perception’.

To believe in the important new role women are playing far apart from that traditional one, of just caring for their home and raising their children, is a new perception that should be adopted to the extent that we should never pressure any single woman, but instead appreciate her role within society. Egyptian women are increasingly teachers, engineers, physicians, judges, ministers; therefore, it is not appropriate to stick to such perception if she is still single. The media should not use the old frame of single women as spinsters to apply comedy to its entertaining materials, especially movies. They should instead reflect how successful single women are in life, and work. Single women should no longer be material for comedy in society and media, but a role model of success.

The problem here lies in the contradiction of how the society views “marriage” as a requirement, particularly for women, yet it does not provide ways to remove women’s obstacles to get married. Furthermore, it views marriage as the only natural way to be a complete adult, while singleness, which is prevalent in all societies, is seen as un-natural. The most troubling thing is that women are the only ones criticized for being single and considered by the society as incomplete. In an article, written by Hamam Abd El Maboud on the site IslamOnline, (<http://www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2001-05/13/article16.shtml>) it says that some of the Egyptian People Assembly's members are calling to establish a Fund for Marriage to solve the problem of *onousa* or being still-unmarried in the Egyptian society.⁵ The way the

⁵ This fund will set out to help and sustain males who have no financial ability to marry and make a family; however, the Assembly tackles this problem of singlehood as a problem of spinsters and not vice versa.

Assembly is articulating the problem, is an example of how society articulates the problem: in female terms! This, itself, is problematic.

In the following pages, the researcher emphasizes two main concerns. First, spinsterhood has dramatically increased in recent years, which has worsened the situation for single, unmarried women because societal values have not changed to match the reality. As a result, many women who are above 26 years of age, have started to worry about their situation, and are scared to be identified as spinsters or *awanes* which may lead them to make concessions in their choice of husband purely to avoid the label of *anas*. Second, the media, instead of helping to discuss the issue of singlehood - for both men and women – objectively, is instead helping to promote an ugly, sarcastic image of single, unmarried women as *anas* in Egyptian society.

There are three factors that have contributed to this problem: ideological factors, economic factors and socio-cultural factors. The first, ideological factors, relate to women's changing empowerment as they start to work and to depend on themselves, adopting new notions of "freedom", "Independence", and "equality".

The second, economic factors, include the increasing national debt, and the economic deterioration which has struck Egypt, coupled with unemployment. Men are increasingly abandoning marriage due to the financial burdens and requirements placed on them. According to the society's perception, women are the main losers because men can marry at whatever age, but women may not for many factors such as biological and societal factors as will be described in the body of the paper.

The third, social and cultural Factors, will be the focus of this paper. As women today have reached the highest degrees and obtained significant increases of their rights politically and socially, the Egyptian man's mentality remains averse to marrying a woman who is more educated than he is. Here, for example, if a woman is a professor or minister and has attained a

high level of education, no man will dare ask to marry her because he believes that she demand equality if not seek to dominate him in everything. He may feel that her education and salary give her power over him; therefore, he prefers to marry a woman who may stay home as this helps him to maintain his authority over her. Due to his Arab cultural mentality, he will never accept his wife to have the authority. It is noteworthy to restate that the educated working woman may be the loser, and she may even blame herself or regret choosing this path, hoping to return to a more traditional role due to societal pressure that no matter how a high position she has, she is not complete because she is *anas*. Thus, a new social reality must be constructed: a reality which affirms that single women have a positive and meaningful role in society, a reality in which she is not defined by her marital status. She is complete regardless of age, education, marriage, work, or children.

This thesis is divided into six parts: introduction, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology, results, and finally, conclusions and recommendations. In the theoretical framework, the researcher uses a core theory, the Social Construction of Reality Theory, as well as two peripheral theories, Social Identification Theory, and the Feminist and Muted Group Theory – a merger of the two theories – to set up basis for this research. Also, she presents a new social reconstruction of reality approach. The social construction of reality theory shows the distorted and biased portrayal of social groups such as depicting single women as spinsters and the increase in accepting this portrayed frame as a normal one will reinforce this existent frame. In relation to the social identification theory, 'normal' married women are the prototypical members of the 'married society', while single women are downgraded to the out-group status, or defective. Finally, the researcher highlights the gender inequality issue and women's rights through focusing on the negative stereotype of 'spinsters' in contrast with bachelors which depending on the feminist perspective and the muted group theory will be the result of a male-dominant approach as women themselves follow men's

agenda mutedly. The new social reconstruction of reality approach is suggested to be the solution to problems of stereotyping women especially single women in the Egyptian media and drama.

After exploring these theories and their relationship with singleness, the researcher offers, in her literature review, a different cultural perspectives of the spinsterhood through referring to the concept and how it has been defined in different dictionaries whether English or Arabic ones, a historical background of singleness either globally or locally in Egypt, and the previous studies (the social-psychology and media ones) that tackle the issue. In addition, the researcher points out how media persons perceive singlehood as a spinsterhood ignoring it as being a bachelorhood. Then, the researcher highlights the role expected of media especially movies towards single women instead of dealing sarcastically with the issue.

After tackling the theoretical framework and reviewing the literature, the researcher, in her methodology, investigates relationships and differences between the role played by the Egyptian media – particularly film – in shaping the perception of spinsterhood or *onousa* phenomenon. The study focuses on three main research questions:

Main RQ1) What are the different dimensions of the spinsterhood problem?

Main RQ2) What are the reasons for this problem?

Main RQ3) What are the solutions for this problem?

Combining around a dozen in-depth interviews and field observations, with a survey of 326 persons and a content analysis of 54 Egyptian movies (taken as models of the Egyptian cinema), in addition to a qualitative analysis of a docudrama, portraying spinsters within, the researcher approaches the topic with both qualitative and quantitative methodological rigor to guarantee credibility and validity. The survey uses the random stratified sampling, where both Likert rating scale and the bi-polar semantic differential scale are the great part of the survey;

while the film content analysis uses the purposive sample from the available sample in its exploration of Egyptian movies.

The heart of the paper is the Findings section, where the researcher recounts with the analysis and findings of her questionnaire, content and qualitative analysis, in-depth interviews with religious men, psychology and media experts, and direct observations.

In the final chapter, Discussion and Conclusions, the researcher restates her goal of this study to apply the different theories used to discover and answer her research questions that support what needs to change and offers suggestions of some steps to achieve positive change.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter will introduce the theoretical framework, which is derived from one core theory, the social construction of reality model, and a group of peripheral theories revolving around the core: the social identification theory, and the feminist and muted group theory. The researcher will summarize each theory, and investigate its significance in relation to her study.

2.1 The Social Construction of Reality

The main theory of this study is the social construction of reality model. This theory has been inspired by Marx's theory of change, and the German culture with a special focus on Karl Mannheim's endeavor to resolve the crisis of culture that encircled post-World War II Germany (Jackson, Levereaux, and Rhine, 1999). This theory says that reality is constantly being socially constructed through daily life and from generation to generation. People shape the world in their organization of daily interactions with others and create relevance from the collective past to the present. Most of the time 'reality' is being constructed on an unconscious level; we develop patterns of interacting based on things that are previously engrained through daily activities, observations and experiences from within a community (Berger and Luckmann, 1971). One can understand how reality is constructed by conducting a sociological analysis of knowledge and what it means in a particular context. Together we create the reality, so that it may be understandable for everyone within a particular society or group. However, what is 'real' depends on the time and community: what is 'real' or applicable for the sheikh in Egypt may be different from what is 'real' for the Canadian businesswoman. Thus this theory explains how groups construct and spread knowledge.

One of the main things that are socially constructed are the institutions by which we organize society. These institutions can be everything from currency, to marriage, to government, to laws (Searle, 1995). These things are intangibles; they are based upon each society or community's normative framework, which arises from the social construction of

reality, and is justified or rationalized. This is how institutions make up the social meanings, which are constituted in social interactions and then transformed into institutional and organizational rules, which in turn justify actions. In such a process, meanings may be modified according to the situation given. They may also be driven from their original place according to the context given to them. This is one way that the meaning of certain things can be changed over time as history evolves (Tuchman, 1978).

The main pillar that helps to convey information among members of a community, and facilitates the social construction of reality is language (Searle, 1995). As McCarthy (1996) explains, social reality is 'produced' and 'communicated', its meaning is derived in and through systems of communication. Language creates concepts and it is the way through which we reach common understandings of a subject, or topic. Since the advent of the printing press and television, media has come to play an increasingly active role in the production and dissemination of language, and thus, the construction of reality. Conveying information in a clear and fast way, this gives the media the upper hand, over face-to-face communication.

Mass media is responsible for legitimizing or disputing other social constructs by defining and distributing knowledge on a wide societal scale... Mass communication, through social constructs, also affects us on a broader level by helping to shape our world-wide relations and influencing our social and political destinies (Jackson, Levereaux, and Rhine, 1999).

This influence places tremendous responsibility on the media because people believe the media's depictions to be 'real' or 'true'. In brief, the conjunction of language and media together creates a powerful impact on societies and their construction of reality.

In "Stereotypes in the Media: So What?", Bradley W. Gorham (1999) refers to the rich literature of stereotypes in psychology. He mentions that it is commonly believed that the repetitive representations of social groups in certain ways in the media are to some extent responsible for the effects of how audience members perceive people in those groups. The author mentions that Lippmann speaks about the pictures in our minds, which are created not only through our personal experiences, but also through what we learn and acquire from other

people. He considers these stereotypes as products of social dealings, and therefore likely to represent the biases of these interactions.

Building on the social construction of reality theory, the author states that "Much of what we 'know' about the world comes from agreeing with other people that a particular fact is 'true'" (pp. 231). He elaborates that people's knowledge- images in the minds- does not derive from their own knowledge but from other people, and that the media contributes by presenting some of these images and pictures that form our "agreement reality".

Gorham (1999) says that stereotypes are experiences, which we know from our social world, about certain social groups. he says that those who lie in the prevailing social position have the supremacy to identify the dominant experiences in addition to their capability to demonstrate that this identification is normal and indisputable. The author also emphasizes that the media do not mirror the world empirically, but instead they assist "construct and maintain it by re-presenting particular meanings and understandings of "reality"". Gorham concludes that cultural stereotypes in the media can manipulate our understandings of media content in a way that supports the dominant cultural traditions recommending that it may be hard to curtail the negative influences of stereotypical images in the media, but it is not impossible by promoting critical media skills.

In an article titled, "Media and the Social Construction of Reality: Toward an Integration of Theory and Research", Hanna Adoni and Sherrill Mane (1984) developed a theoretical framework that is common among studies of the role of the mass media in the social construction of reality from both the European and American communication research traditions. Proposing a holistic approach to understanding of the role of mass media in the process of the social construction of reality, as well as integrating the two approaches together, they demonstrate how television news shows a distorted image of objective reality.

In her book titled, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*, Gaye Tuchman (1978) describes news as a window to the world, through which people may know what they want, need, and should know about themselves and others. Tuchman considers news as a frame, asserting that the news media set the framework in which people talk about public issues, and that the news media play a crucial role in setting the political agenda for news consumers (1978). She explores the theoretical argument about "the role of consciousness in the construction of social meanings and the organization of experience" (1978, pp. X). People are considered the social actors, and their activities are the products of their socialization, based on characteristics of their social structure. In this sense, then, it is the society that creates the consciousness which leads to action.

Overall, the Social Construction of Reality theory shows the distortion of reality by the mass media, the biased depiction of social groups, and the construction of one-aspect subjective reality that is based on false images due to the inherently biased depictions of reality (Adoni and Mane, 1984). Based on this false, constructed image by a subjective biased representation of reality, the researcher will hypothesize that, based on the TV drama (movies) emphasis of the image of single still-unmarried woman as a spinster or *anas*, the Egyptian people have a pre-conceived notion the characteristics and looks of the single woman. These perceptions are dominating the Egyptians' minds based on the picture created by the mass media, regardless of its accuracy.

The researcher argues that the conceptual foundation of a socially constructed reality provides the method of action, the link, between the images and words used in Egyptian cinema and television and the attitudes of members of Egyptian society. This is a critical connection to make: if an image or phrase is viewed on a regular basis, it will be accepted as normal by the audience. This is especially true in the case of spinsters: the concept is pre-existing, so when the image is displayed it fits readily into an existent frame, reinforcing it.

This creates a self-perpetuating cycle: the audience will then repeat these phrases and maintain this frame themselves because it is “normal.” The increase in acceptance of the “normal” frame will, in turn, cause others to accept it because so many of their peers have done likewise.

Once a picture or a phrase can be embedded (in this case, further embedded) into the societal consciousness as status quo, those members will then take action to maintain normalcy. For the purposes of this research, the developed status quo is that spinsters are considered atypical or deficient – they lie outside what is considered to be the “normal” frame. This concept is reinforced by the repeated images seen in Egyptian cinema and television. Once past a certain age, an unmarried woman will be cast into this mold, labeled, and will be stereotyped as a result...the action that is taken is to put pressure on these women to marry or to reject them. The chain of effect runs from society constructing its own reality to taking action to maintain it. The action of rejecting the out-group will be described subsequently.

2.2 Social Identification Theory

In Turner's book (1991) on social psychology of social influence, he defines social influence saying, "it comprises the processes whereby people directly or indirectly influence the thoughts, feelings and actions of others." He sets up a group of questions that influence researchers are worried about:

How can one persuade another individual or group to change their beliefs, opinions and attitudes? How can one convince somebody that views they believe are right are wrong, and that views they had previously considered wrong are right? Why do the members of a social group, a subculture, a society, tend to hold similar beliefs and acts in similar ways? Why are people who are different from the norm so often disliked and rejected? When do we want people to agree with us and when do not we care? Why do social groups have different social values and see the world differently? (Turner, 1991, pp. 1-2)

He sees that "social life is full of argument, controversy, and conflict about what is socially and morally right or wrong." Turner says that social dealings between people who are connected psychologically as members of groups which often share sets of norms on various subjects. (Turner, 1991) Relating to conformity, the author offers some variables such as group

interdependence, cohesiveness, and unanimity. He sees that these groups are highly influential. One is simultaneously pressured to please the group and seek acceptance, and likewise will be more willing to accept information coming from within that group than from outside it. Previous studies show that influence varies with the in-group versus out-group source of the message and not simply with the information it contains. For example, people shift more towards similar and in-group others than different and out-group others on exactly the same items and when presented with exactly the same information. Turner et al have suggested a self-categorization theory of group polarization (Turner, pp. 76). People are strongly likely to conform to group norms and the author characterizes the above research as indicating a strong 'conformity bias'.

Turner (1991) argues that self-categorization theory provides a method for viewing the self and one's interactions with others and that these interactions will be strongly shaped by how one categorizes oneself. (pp. 155) According to Turner, people may categorize themselves with others similar to them (the in-group) or in opposition to others different from them (the out-group). As Turner discusses the methods of categorization, others have elaborated on the effects of this process of grouping.

Severin and Tankard (2001) refers to John C. Turner and Henri Tajfel who developed the "social identification model of group influence", which suggests that a social group may consist of two or more persons who may share a similar common social identification or those who may distinguish themselves as members of the same social category (Severin & Tankard, 2001, pp. 192). This model passes through three stages; first, categorization, through which people may be classified and labeled as, for example Christians, Muslims, Jews, whites, or blacks . For the purpose of this research, there is no need to hypothesize a large number of groups. Macro-categories will suffice, specifically married society and single still-unmarried women (depicted as spinsters or *Awanes*). "Normal" married women will be the prototypical

members of the “married society” in-group, but their husbands as well as unmarried men (perhaps soon-to-be-married) would also consider themselves to be a part of this group. Second, there is the process of identification, which consists of identifying oneself (the in-group) from the out-group, and giving this in-group advantages on which its self-esteem is based. The advantages for the married group is simply: marriage is considered a fully normal situation, and perhaps a fulfillment of religious duty. Then, the final stage will occur, through comparison, as the in-group is compared with the other groups perceiving a bias in favor of the in-group. For example, the “married” group will consider themselves to be better than the single still-unmarried group (*awanes*) on the basis that they are normal and that the unmarried group is somehow defective.

In Stets and Burke's study (2000), social identity is the individual's knowledge that s/he belongs to a social group which consequently consists of a group of individuals. Those group members observe themselves as part of the same social category, and through a social comparison method, "persons who are similar to the self are categorized with the self and are labeled the in-group; persons who differ from the self are categorized as the out-group." (Stets and Burke, 2000, pp. 225)

From Severin and Tankard's book (2001), Vincent Price, a communication scholar, argues that mass media play a crucial role in "bringing social identification processes to bear on the formation of public opinion" (pp. 193) In the Price Study (1989) the author supports a three-step method: First, classifying and perceiving the self and the others as members of in-group and out-groups; second, knowing the representative or distinctive characteristics and manners of all groups; finally, attributing the perceived stereotypical descriptions of one's own group to the self. This process operates similarly to the example cited above and the same definitions will apply here.

Price's study examined this theory through an experiment using a fabricated set of newspaper reports portraying the response of the community in general. Although the reports were not true, it was completely believable to the focus group subjects. The results of the experiment support the social identification theory, as many subjects applied their group membership to decide on and express their own opinion on the fabricated reports (Price, 1989). Group identification is not merely a superficial process...it has definite and observable results in the believability of information from in- or out-groups.

Social Identification Theory provides a mutually reinforcing complement to the concept of Social Construction of Reality. Specifically, the process of group formation here is highly important. Who considers themselves normal and why, and who is considered abnormal and why? Assuming the pre-existing negative conception of the “spinster,” the “married” in-group will simply form itself in opposition to this group, relegating these others to out-group status. These group identities and, importantly, the characteristics of these groups (normal or happy vs. barren, desperate, or even ridiculous) are reinforced in film and television.

This reinforcement is the acting mechanism of the social construction of reality. If it was not previously true, it becomes true. Furthermore, the findings of the study regarding the believability of information from in- and out- groups are notable. In-group polemics against the “*awanes*” will likely be accepted, while the out-group’s defense of itself will likely be rejected because its source is the out-group.

2.3 Feminism and Muted Group Theory

Feminist theory includes work done in a wide variety of disciplines that contain different approaches such as: women’s role, lives, politics, and gender issues. The theory aims at understanding the nature of gender inequality as well as gender relations and sexuality. It also advocates women’s rights, interests, and issues. Subjects investigated within the context of

the feminist theory are including: discrimination, stereotyping, objectification, sexual objectification, domination.

In a study titled, "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness", Elaine Showalter (1981) says, "Women's difficulties with feminine identity come after the Oedipal phase, in which male power and cultural hegemony give sex differences a transformed value" (Showalter, pp. 196). She adds,

"Women have been left out of history not because of the evil conspiracies of men in general or male historian in particular, but because we have considered history only in male-centered terms" (Showalter, pp. 198).

Showalter explains that women and their activities are neglected due to incompatible history questions asked to women. That is why, she sees that the only remedy to that will be through the focus on a "woman-centered inquiry", taking into account the possibility of the presence of a female culture within the general culture which both males and females participate in. Showalter refers to the separate roles for males and females in the late Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, and she clarifies that the female's sphere was identified and maintained by men, "but women frequently internalized its precepts in the American "cult of true womanhood" and the English 'feminine ideal'" (Showalter, pp.198)

In her study, Showalter refers to the stimulating analysis of female culture by Shirley and Edwin Ardener, as they have set a theory of women's culture that is not historically restricted as well as offering a terminology for its characteristics. In Edwin Ardener's essays, "Belief and the Problem of Women" (1972) and "The Problem Revisited" (1975), it is proposed that women form a muted group. The peripheries of their "culture and reality overlap, but are not wholly contained by, the dominant (male) group" (Showalter, pp. 200).

Thus we can consider the concept of the muted group to be an outgrowth of feminist research. Showalter in her study refers to Ardener's proposing troubles by the term "muted" in relation to language and power. She adds that both females as the muted group and males as the dominant group engender "beliefs or ordering ideas of social reality at the unconscious level,

but dominant groups control the forms or structures in which consciousness can be articulated." Consequently, the muted groups must intercede their beliefs or thoughts through the permissible structures of dominant structures (Showalter, pp.200).

Shirley and Edwin Ardener developed the muted group theory in the late 1960s. Further theorists, Henely and Kramarae (1994) show an "inequality in the metastructure of interpretation resulting in the accepted interpretation of an interaction being that of the more powerful person, usually the male." (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999). The authors add that men were the dominator class who exploited women, while women were the muted exploited class. The authors state that this theory has been significant in the feminist movement, as men are capable to enforce their opinion of the world on every person; however, women's voices are hardly ever perceived. Because they are incapable to air their opinions in the "dominant masculine discourse", they turn out to be muted or silent. The researchers add that even if women talk they express a different social reality that is not theirs.

The researcher considers the negative stereotype of "spinsters" to be the result of a male-dominant approach, and will seek to investigate this overarching stereotype using the assumptions of feminist theory, which deals with gender inequalities. The assumption is that, in a male-dominant society, a role in which a woman exists as an independent entity outside the institution of marriage is likely to be considered in a negative light. Therefore, marriage is considered the "preferable, normal" option for women to take, and will be emphasized as such in the mass media. The stereotypical characterization of the "spinster" can be viewed, perhaps, as an unconscious means of influencing these "errant" women to return to her traditional roles.

Furthermore, if we apply Wall and Gannon-Leary's study findings to the context of this research, then, we find that single or unmarried women will fall in the muted category, as even if they were to be presented as spinsters or *awanes*, they were presented from the point of view of men, the dominators. Although single women act in drama or daily life, they play the role

that expresses a different social reality than their personalities. In other words, women follow the agenda of men mutely. As the muted group within the dominant structure, they are unable to give voice to their own position.

Based on this theoretical framework, the researcher proposes a new construction of social reality that mirrors single women based on the truth of how single women look like especially with their new roles as working/educated ones who have fulfilled success in their life. They are not anymore those depicted images or frames who are still waiting to obtain or find a groom as in the past to fulfill their previous traditional roles. Language is important in conveying this new social reconstruction of reality because it helps in creating concepts, and naturally may also help in the process of recreating them.

Media are the key player in transmitting this new perception through its main device: language because they are the effective actors in framing, influencing, constructing, and reconstructing our fate. Therefore, increasing the number of cinema female directors may be beneficial to avoid stereotyping the unmarried woman image as a spinster and change the perception of her old frame as a wife and mother. Single women should not be framed as incomplete or labeled as the out-group if they- choicely or forcefully- did not fulfill marriage approach in life. This new suggested reconstruction of reality may be an approach to face the reality of the male, dominant group, who tries to construct this old frame, and women should confront this male dominant agenda instead of accepting it mutely.

The increasing rates of singlehood in Egypt have made this study both timely and urgent. The researcher intends to explore the relationship between mass media viewership rates, with a focus on film and the perception of single, still-unmarried woman in Egyptian society. Due to the male-dominant character of Egyptian society, it is expected that people will usually link the problem of singlehood to women and seldom consider bachelorhood a problem. In pursuing this study, it is important to first identify the constructed concept of

spinsterhood, and how single women are depicted in drama. We should then seek to find out if there is a positive or negative relationship between religion, culture and history and television drama in tackling the *onousa* issue.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

After investigating the theoretical framework and proposing the social construction of spinsterhood as a concept that has become an unconscious and problematic part of the Egyptian reality, the researcher offers, in her literature review, different cultural views of *onousa*. This section will begin by investigating definitions of “*onousa*” in English and Arabic dictionaries and will subsequently explore the historical background of singleness both globally and nationally, as well as previous social, psychological and media studies that deal with this issue. Using a feminist social construction of reality argument, the researcher highlights how media - particularly journalists - perceive singlehood as a spinsters' problem and not as a bachelors' one. The literature review will conclude by discussing the role expected of media - especially film - towards single women, calling for a new societal role for single women, which transcends their sarcastic and negative depiction.

3.1 Definitions of ‘Spinster’ and ‘*Anas*’

According to the Macmillan English dictionary for Advanced Learners (2002), a spinster is an abusive and insulting statement for a woman who is not married and is past age when woman usually get married. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (1984) identifies a spinster as an unmarried woman who remains single after the conventional age of marrying, and spinsterhood as the state of being a spinster. Similarly, the American Heritage dictionary (1992), defines a spinster as a woman who has remained single beyond the conventional age for marrying, a single woman, or a woman whose occupation is spinning. Finally, *Wikipedia*, (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/spinster>), defines a spinster is an old maid or a woman who has never been married. This term is frequently used for women who are past the common age for marriage, although that age differs according to cultures and periods.

In an article "Theory of Definition" Arthur Pap (1964), uses the word 'spinster' as an example of a definition that is "a stipulation or... a proposition, i.e., something that can be

called true or false" (pp. 49). Accordingly, he states that a 'spinster' is defined as an unmarried woman older than 25. Pap explains,

One can accept or reject a proposal; but since to make a proposal is not to *assert* anything, the question of truth or falsehood is inappropriate. But the same statement may be meant as a report of the actual usage of the word "spinster": English-speaking people apply the word "spinster" to women of the described sort and to no other objects. In that case the definition is a proposition, and then it is appropriate to ask whether it is true or false (1964, pp. 49)

Whether or not Pap's age stipulation is valid in each cultural context may be contested, but it certainly seems relevant to Egypt, as will be discussed in subsequent sections.

According to some Arabic dictionaries such as *El Sahah for Language and Science*, Merashely (1974) says that *anas* is the callous she-camel, or a woman who has stayed unmarried and lives at her family's home long after puberty. Although she has not married and has never been sexually active, she is not counted within the virgin group once she takes the title of *anas* or spinster. Similarly, in *Gomhour El Logha*, Abou Bakr Mohamed El Hassen Al Azdy Al Basry (1926) says that *anas* is the callous she-camel, and if the woman is called *anas*, it means that she has passed the age of marriage and has not married. In El Wagiz Arabic Dictionary (1994), *anas* woman is one who has not married long after her puberty, so she is *anas* - *awanes* for the plural.

For a woman to remain single, beyond the conventional age for marrying, is clearly a common and unconstructive theme in all of the above dictionaries whether from English or Arabic discussion of spinsters or *awanes*. In both English and Arabic dictionaries, spinster is almost inherently negative as it is used as a cursing and abusive statement for an unmarried older woman, particularly *anas*, as its original meaning is the callous she-camel, a negative simile for single woman.

3.2 Historical Background of Marriage and Spinsterhood – Globally and Locally

After exploring the definition of a spinster, its meanings, and effects, the researcher now turns to explore this problem globally and locally, to find out where it is rooted. This

section will explore whether this problem is a universal one or a problem that is related to the Arab/Islamic countries that are still preserving their religions, traditions, and beliefs. This historical background will logically be divided into two parts: first, globally, and second, locally, with subdivisions for Pharaonic history, religious history, and culture and traditions in the latter part.

3.2.A Globally:

As early as the fourteenth century, the term ‘spinster’ was a legal designation attached to women whose job was spinning. During the seventeenth century, the term also came to represent an unmarried woman, developing new legal and colloquial connotations that have carried on to the very recent past and present respectively. In legal terms, any woman that had never married was considered a "spinster" on her marriage licence in the United Kingdom, until the introduction of the Civil Partnership Act in 2004. Colloquially, the term is still used in Australia, for example, to describe social celebrations known as "Bachelor and Spinster Balls" held for young single people, particularly in the rural areas (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/spinster>).

There are many traditional stereotypes about single women as spinsters, characterizing and depicting them as frigid, conservative, desperate, worried, and/or the victim of a cruel mother or family caretaker. Stereotypical representations of spinsters as victims or caretakers can be seen in Hollywood film characters like Charlotte in *Now Voyager* and Bessie in *Marvin's Room* among others. Charlotte, is troubled, unmarried daughter of a domineering mother, played by Bette Davis. As described by Deborah J. Mustard, (2000) “Charlotte is dressed in a drab, ill-fitting dress; her hair is pulled back in a bun; and she wears old-fashioned, wire-framed spectacles. Her presence screams “spinster”” (<http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/sfisco/spinster.html>). Even before she has the opportunity to speak, Charlotte is pegged with the classic stereotyped image of a spinster: a little odd, eccentric, out of date.

Similarly, Bessie, played by Diane Keaton is constructed as an eccentric caretaker decades later. (Mustard, 2000).

Until the late nineteenth century, unmarried women could not possess property and were subject to the financial domination of the family hierarchy. As Mustard explains, "In the United States, the pressure was on for women to marry, raise families, and fulfill the American dream" (2000, <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/sfisco/spinster.html>). In the twentieth century, spinsterhood rates increased dramatically as a result of the two World Wars, because the number of men available for marriage dropped sharply.⁶ Portraits of an old spinster with a fading photo of her dead war-hero sweetheart on the mantelpiece became a common image in movies of the 1950s and 1960s and still linger to this day (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/spinster>). During this era, it was expected that women who worked during the war years should return home to their traditional role in the domestic sphere. This indicates the single women dichotomy during this time, they became independent but at the expense of taking away jobs from males who required to work to support their family.

Since the 1960s, there has been a shift in American culture towards acceptance of single women as independent and productive members of society. However, the core threat to men and the family is still part of the modern spinster stereotype, and this is supported in the many movies which depict single women as having very responsible jobs, but at the same time suffering from some sort of break down or eccentricity (Mustard, 2000). With the end of the twentieth century and the start of the twenty-first century, the idea of spinster has been changed and adopted as a positive and powerful lifestyle option. There are movements to claim new terms such as "quirkyalone" (<http://www.quirkyalone.net/qa/>) for the phenomenon of choosing singleness over marriage, and shifting away from dependency on a partner for wholeness or meaning. Karen S. Peterson (2004) states that a quirkyalone is not contrasting to being in a

⁶ For example, in the First World War, Britain lost around one million young men, and France and Germany each lost approximately two million. This led to a significant problem because millions of younger women in these countries were unable to find men to marry.

relationship, but has approached to value 'singledom' as a normal and natural status and a mode to live a satisfying life. Defining the term, the website states that a Quirkyaloner is:

A person who enjoys being single (but is not opposed to being in a relationship) and generally prefers to be alone rather than dating for the sake of being in a couple. With unique traits and an optimistic spirit; a sensibility that transcends relationship status (<http://www.quirkyalone.net/qa/>).

Yet spinsterhood and responses to it must be explored beyond Western Europe and North America.

In *The Story of Marriage and Singlehood in the World*, Ali Abd El Wahed Wafi (1987) offers a compelling exploration of singlehood throughout history in a much broader context. Wafi's main argument is that marriage is the normal situation between a man and a woman. He argues it is better than other kinds of sexual relations or intercourse because it is a relationship that develops under the circumstances that satisfy and are approved by the jurisprudence of society and its traditions. However, he also refers in great depth to what is called 'singlehood', which can be divided into two types: an obligatory one according to a determined social system, such as some Jewish, Christian, or Buddhist groups; and a circumstantial one, adopted by individual desire, or as a result of a lack of interest or suitability with others.

In his exploration of the concept of singleness, Wafi claims that most of the human jurisprudences or systems consider singlehood as an unnatural, abnormal position for both man and woman. Proving that the institution of marriage is common throughout history, and around the world, he gives examples of Latin American tribes like the *Incas* in Peru the *Aztecs* in Mexico who both have strong social traditions that do not accept singleness for men or women after specific ages. The inhabitants in *Talscala* province in Mexico, for example, went so far as to disgrace single men by shaving their hair off. Wafi also discusses ancient Chinese traditions, in which the family was obligated to make their sons marry when they reached puberty, regardless of their health. It was catastrophic if a son died before puberty, and hatred for singleness ran so deep that parents would marry the spirits of dead boys to the spirits of dead

girls. An aversion to singleness was also common in Persian society in the Zoroastrian era, Korean society, and Hindu communities in India to provide only a few more examples. Essentially, Wafi documents that most societies have viewed bachelorhood or singleness as an abnormal situation although the reasons for their hatred of singleness and its consequences have differed.

On the other side, Wafi (1987) discusses what he terms 'optional singlehood'. Some people have started to view marriage not as a social or societal issue, but rather as a private affair, which others - family, community, nation-state – should not intervene with. An individualist approach suggests that it should not be obligatory for a person to marry, as it is conditional on their economic ability to marry as well as their interest. Wafi (1987) mentions factors that have encouraged many individuals to pursue an 'optional singlehood' stance in modern civilized societies such as: the high expenses of life in many different classes, the freedom and delight which are available without marriage restrictions, and culture spread between men and women in all classes which leads marriage candidates to seek ideal social positions through marriage that are hard attain. Therefore, many people prefer to remain single if they cannot find the appropriate qualities in a partner. He indicates that these factors have created a 'marriage crisis' in contemporary Egypt, particularly among the middle classes.

3.2.B Locally in Egypt:

In this section, the researcher tackles the importance of marriage in Egypt, Starting from the Pharaohs' period, moving to an analysis of the three monotheist religions - which play a crucial role in creating social norms surrounding marriage and singleness in Egyptian society – and concluding with a discussion of culture and traditions in their conceptualization of marriage versus singleness (and/or spinsterhood).

3.2.B.1 Importance of Marriage vs. Singlehood in the Pharaohs' Literature

The Pharaohs were very concerned with marriage, considering a good wife as a gift from the gods to whoever deserves her (Sayed, 2007). There were many injunctions for sons to “if... wise, establish a home and love your wife from your heart.” (Betah Hotob in Sayed 2007, pp. 159), or when choosing a wife look for one who embodied qualities of “contentment, being humble in her dreams and requirements, wide-thinking, and kind hearted” (Sneb Hotob in Sayed, 2007, pp159). Marriage was considered the foundation of society:

If you love a virgin and she exchanges love with you, and if you committed adultery with her, do not betray her because storing the holy family relation is considered as life for the society, and if you committed that sin then you betray chivalry, anger god and bring disgrace, damage, and humiliation upon yourself.” (Sneb Hotob in Sayed, pp. 159-160).

In poetic terms, marriage was even described in *El Amarna* Papyrus as “the voyage of life” and “..in the sea of life... this voyage needs supplies to reach the beach safely.” (Sayed, 2007 pp. 160). The Pharaohs recommended, that the wife should be a beautiful woman from a good family, but, concurrently, that she should be wise because that is better than beauty, as the beautiful lady is not always kind, but the kind lady is always beautiful.

3.2.B.2 Marriage vs. Singlehood in Religion

All the three monotheist religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam agree that marriage is crucial in order to reproduce in a legitimate way to prevent people from *Zina* or adultery. However, they, especially Christianity and Islam, have not made it obligatory except on those who bear or need it to achieve their sexual needs and to save them from adultery.

3.2.B.2.a In Judaism

Jews believe that marriage is "a holy institution", the purpose of which is to establish a faithful Jewish home (Economos, <http://deaconministry.com/judaism.htm>). According to the Jewish traditions, only by marriage, women would be dignified:

Marriage in the Jewish tradition is an expression of confidence and trust in each other. It signifies the legal and moral commitments as detailed in Jewish law and customs and is a

declaration of the dignified status of the woman. (Economos, <http://deaconministry.com/judaism.htm>)

It has even been termed 'the ideal state of existence', and a man without a wife, or a woman without a husband being considered as incomplete. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_view_of_marriage)

Tracey R. Rich (2005) says that the **Torah** does not offer much guidance about the procedures of marriage. The process of finding a wife, the form of the wedding ceremony, and the nature of the matrimonial relationship are all clarified with more details in the **Talmud**. However according to Rich:

Rav Yehuda taught that 40 days before a male child is conceived, a voice from heaven announces whose daughter he is going to marry, literally a match made in heaven! In Yiddish, this perfect match is called "bashert," a word meaning fate or destiny. The word "bashert" can be used to refer to any kind of fortuitous good match, such as finding the perfect job or the perfect house, but it is usually used to refer to one's soul mate.

Although there are a number of statements in the Talmud that seem to go against the idea of bashert, he explains that

...the idea has a strong hold within the Jewish community: look at any listing of Jewish personal ads and you're bound to find someone "Looking for my bashert." Finding your bashert doesn't mean that your marriage will be trouble-free. Marriage, like everything worthwhile in life, requires dedication, effort and energy. (2005, <http://www.jewfaq.org/marriage.htm>)

It is for this reason, he concludes that Judaism allows for divorce.

However, regardless of the presence of divorce, Rich explains that marriage is essential in Judaism, and whoever refrains from marriage "is not considered holy, as it is in some other religions". On the contrary, he explains that singleness is considered unnatural:

The Talmud says that an unmarried man is constantly thinking of sin. The Talmud tells of a rabbi who was introduced to a young unmarried rabbi. The older rabbi told the younger one not to come into his presence again until he was married.

This point is reinforced in *ReligionFacts*, (2007, <http://www.religionfacts.com/judaism/cycle/marriage.htm>). This website explains Marriage as being extremely respected and strongly encouraged in Judaism, while is singlehood rejected:

...the celibate life has never been considered more holy than the married life. In fact, one must be married in order to become a rabbi. Judaism's high view of marriage derives from its view of the home and family as the center of religious life.

According to Michael L. Satlow's "Jewish Marriage in Antiquity", (2001),

The rule is this, that a man, when he does not wed a wife, does not become worthy of death; but when a woman does not wed a husband it amounts to a sin worthy of death; because for a woman there is no offspring except by intercourse with men, and no lineage proceeds from her; but for a man without a wife, when he shall recite the Avesta, as it is mentioned in the Vendidad, there may be a lineage which proceeds onwards to the future existence. (pp 196)

From the Jewish perspective then, it is obligatory for a woman to marry, and she should not remain single because she by that brings blameworthiness upon herself.⁷

However, Rich explains that while procreation is important, companionship, love and intimacy are fundamental aspects of a marriage as well. He emphasizes that "woman was created in Gen. 2:18 because 'it is not good for man to be alone,' rather than because she was necessary for procreation" (2005, <http://www.jewfaq.org/marriage.htm>).

Rich (2005) shows that the procedure of marriage occurs in two different stages: first, kiddushin: because the spouses do not live together at that period, and second, the nisuin, when the process of marriage is completed, as the husband takes his wife to his home and they begin their marital life together.

In the past, the kiddushin and nisuin would routinely occur as much as a year apart. During that time, the husband would prepare a home for the new family. There was always a risk that during this long period of separation, the woman would discover that she wanted to marry another man, or the man would disappear, leaving the woman in the awkward state of being married but without a husband. Today, the two ceremonies are normally performed together.

From what was mentioned, it seems that the problem is connected to the issue of commitment, as there is no commitment from both man or woman to complete marriage, as she may leave for another, while he may disappear. Rich (2005) states that the minimum age for

⁷ As Saltow (2001) states, "Women must marry and procreate in order to participate in the cosmic battle against evil. Should they restrain from this participation by remaining celibate they incur guilt. Men, however, have an option: they can recite the proper texts, thus ensuring a "lineage." While not explicit, this text sets up a tension between biological and "religious" lineage, leaving the latter option available only to males".

marriage, under Jewish law, is 13 for boys and 12 for girls; though, the kiddushin can occur before, and commonly did during medieval times. While the Talmud advises that "a man marry at age 18, or somewhere between 16 and 24."

Ali Abd AL Wahed Wafi (1987) offers a good summary that ties things together well. He explains that marriage is a religious duty for all Jewish men and women. Their jurists come to a decision that the crime of refraining from marriage with the ability to go through it is equal to the murder crime because both turn off the light of Allah, reduce His shadow on earth, and keep His Mercy away from Israel. The importance of marriage reaches such an extent, that Jewish courts have permission to force men to marry. One of the main aims of marriage is to give birth to children. Historically, if the legitimate wife did not bear a son, she had to concede her bed to her slave or her husband's slave in order to bring him a boy, and this boy was considered to be the boy of the legitimate wife and not the slave, as applied to Ismail, son of Abraham, and to Dan and Nephthali, sons of Jacob (Wafi, 1987).

3.2.B.2.b In Christianity

Although Judaism insists on marriage and its importance, and it considers the unmarried person as abnormal, Christianity deals with this issue differently. From the New Testament Book, the Arabic version and the online English one (<http://www.ccel.org/bible/phillips/CP07Cor1.htm>) in 1 Corinthians 7: 1-2. Paul explains, "It is a good principle for a man to have no physical contact with women. Nevertheless, because casual liaisons are so prevalent, let every man have his own wife and every woman her own husband." He goes on to explain that for those who are not married or widowed it is positive to remain unattached, if they have self-control. If they lack this control it is better to be married than tortured by unsatisfied desires. Paul says:

My opinion is this: that amid all the difficulties of the present time you would do best to remain just as you are. Are you married? Well, do not try to be separated. Are you unattached? Then do not try to get married. But if you, a man, should marry, do not think

that you have done anything sinful. And the same applies to a young woman. (1 Corinthians 7: 26-28)

His rationale for these comments is explained in verses 33-34:

The unmarried man is free to concern himself with the Lord's affairs, and how he may please him. But the married man is sure to be concerned with matters of this world, that he may please his wife. You find the same differences in the case of the unmarried and the married woman. The unmarried concerns herself with the Lord's affairs, and her aim in life is to make herself holy, in body and in spirit. But the married woman must concern herself with the things of this world, and her aim will be to please her husband.

He concludes that "Both of them are right, one in marrying and the other in refraining from marriage", but believes, "the latter has chosen the better of two right courses" (1 Corinthians 7: 38).

In a booklet entitled, "A Fatherly Message about the Family and Life", from the Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops Committee in Egypt ", by Pope Stephenos II⁸, warns that mainstream society is moving in a direction that has no concern except to feel delight, and at the same time throws away the conception of life as holy and a gift from God, alongside the theological meaning of and secret to marriage. He calls on the church to maintain its guiding role. In a similar vein, in "A Fatherly Message about the Women's Affairs and its Role in the Society and the Church from the Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops Committee in Egypt", Pope Stephenos II states that women who are widows, women left by their husbands, single women and married ones who suffer from different problems have rights in society. He calls on the church to help provide care and guidance for them in order not to feel that strong loneliness.

Pope Stephenos says,

Jesus Christ submits the message of woman's entity liberation from indepth, and He exposes the secrets of femininity or "*onousa*" {which differs in the Arabic pronunciation from spinsterhood or "*onousa*", which means past age}, and how femininity is holy and sacrificed for serving the society and the church." (Translike, 1996, pp. 15)

In sum, Jesus Christ has conveyed a message to humanity; that is, to respect woman and femininity. Christianity calls to respect women and especially single ones, and offers them help to overcome their loneliness.

⁸ Pope Stephenos II is the Alexandrian Patriarch of the Catholic Church in Egypt

3.2.B.2.c In Islam

From the Islamic perspective, the main purpose of marriage is to reproduce and worship Allah; marriage is not just to satisfy the sexual needs and desires of humankind, but also to acquire love, repose, and tranquility. Allah says, in the Holy Quran Surah 30,

And among His Signs is this: that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect. (Al Hilali and Khan, 1994, Verse 21).

In a book entitled, "The Jurisprudence of Sunni for Women" or *Fiqh El Sunna Lel Nisaa*, by Abu Malek Kamal Bin El Sayed Salem (2002), in a subheading titled, "Judging Marriage", it is considered to be the Sunna of Prophets, as Allah says in Surah 13, Verse 38, "And indeed We sent Messengers before you, and made from them wives and offspring..." (Al Hilali and Khan, Interpretation of Quran, pp. 380).

From all the Quran's verses and the Prophet Muhammad's Hadith, the Islamic Jurisprudents agree that marriage is preferable; however, it is only obligatory when there is fear to commit *Zena* or adultery (Salem, 2002). Significantly, marriage is not mandatory for women in the Quran, as Allah Says in Part 18, Surah 24, Verse 60:

And as for women past child-bearing who do not expect wedlock, it is no sin on them if they discard their (outer) clothing in such a way as not to show their adornment. But to refrain (i.e. not to discard their outer clothing) is better for them. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. (Al Hilali and Khan, Interpretation of Quran, 1994, pp. 549 & 550).

In a Prophet's Hadith, narrated by Abi Said, that a man took his daughter to the Prophet, and he told the Prophet that his daughter refrain to get married, so the Prophet asked her to obey her father, and she answers,

"No" until You tell me about the right of the husband on his wife", and she repeated her words, so the Prophet answered her that "the right of the husband on his wife is that if he suffers from ulcer or even suppuration or bleeding at the nose, and she licks it with her tongue, she will never give him his right, so she swears by Allah Who Sent Him (the Prophet) with the truth that she will never marry. Then, Prophet Muhammad, Pray and Peace Be Upon Him, said, "Do not make your daughters marry except with their permission" (Translike, Salem, pp.362-363).

In the same Surah Allah Taala says in Verse 32:

And marry those among you who are single (i.e. a man who has no wife and the woman who has no husband) and (also marry) the Salihun (pious, fit and capable ones) of your (male) slaves and maid-servants (female slaves). If they be poor, Allah will enrich them out of His Bounty. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-knowing (about the state of the people)" (Al Hilali and Khan, 1994)

Allah Taala also Says in the following Verse: "And let those who find not the financial means for marriage keep themselves chaste, until Allah enriches them of His Bounty" (Al Hilali and Khan, Verse 33). One may argue that the Holy Quran says exactly in the literal meaning in this Verse, "those who find not marriage", and not just as the authors here interpret as "those who find not financial means for marriage", as *Allah Taala* makes it general and does not specify certain reason as the interpreters here use in their interpretation.

...And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), give them such writing, if you know that they are good and trustworthy. And give them something yourselves out of the wealth of *Allah* which He has bestowed Upon you. And force not your maids to prostitution, if they desire chastity, in order that you may make a gain in the (perishable) goods of this worldly life. But if anyone compels them (to prostitution), then after such compulsion, *Allah* is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (to those women, i.e. He will forgive them because they have been forced to do this evil action unwillingly)." (Al Hilali and Khan, Interpretation of Quran, Verse 33, pp. 543 & 544).

Another interpretation of the first part of Verse 33 in "The Holy Quran: English Translation of the meanings and Commentary", says: Let those who find not the wherewithal for marriage Keep themselves chaste, until Allah gives them means Out of His Grace" (The Holy Quran, pp.1014).

In the Quran, if a woman wants to marry she has the choice, and she satisfies Allah through marriage because there is no singlehood in Islam, as Prophet Muhammad, Pray and Peace Be Upon Him, says. If a man or a woman commits adultery, that act will be considered a sin that angers Allah, and *Allah Taala* will punish both. On the contrary, there is a reward or *sawab* in the relation between the husband and his wife because it is lawful. However, Islam did not force men or women who are incapable to marry, as mentioned in *Fiqh El Sunna Lel Nisaa*, by Salem (2002), the Prophet's Hadith directed to the youth that "whoever has the ability

to marry should marry because it will save him/her from adultery, and whoever cannot bear marriage should fast because fasting is saving him or her from committing adultery" (Translike). That is to say, that men or women who do not bear or find marriage should be away from sin and fast to reduce their sexual needs.

In his book, Wafi (1987) refers to the Muslim jurists, such as Dawoud EL Asfahany and Ibn Hazm, who consider marriage mandatory on every Muslim capable to it and to its burdens. They put it in the same position of pray, fasting, and the other pillars of Islam. Thus, they see anyone who leaves it with his ability to it or to its burdens as a sinner, who left one of the pillars of the Islamic religion.

One may think that our Muslim jurists have exaggerated in their determination of the importance of marriage in Islam as well as Jews to the extent that lead people later to construct a social reality that those who are still unmarried are abnormal, and with the powerful role portrayed by the media especially the drama (movies) to depict especially single, unmarried woman as crazy, ugly, abnormal, the representation of unmarried woman as a spinster or *anas* has started to be constructed and supported more and more. Due to the repetition and the regular basis viewing, it will be acknowledged as normal by the audience. That is obvious, as although unmarried man or woman are not desired of according to all religions in order to avoid illegitimate sexual relations; however, the concept of singlehood or spinster (*anas*) is not connected except with single, still-unmarried woman, whereas, bachelorhood or the bachelor's (*azeb*) representation is not constructed or supported according to the single still-unmarried man in the Egyptian society or media.

Although the Prophet calls the people to marry, as in His Hadith, "Marry and do not divorce because divorce may shake the Throne of Grace", he does not make it mandatory, and that obviously appears in His words that women should be asked: does she agree or not before

marriage? This shows how the Prophet returns to women their rights that were lost before His Message or *Daawaa*. Even when a women came asking Him to be divorced from her husband because she hates him, and her family has forced her to marry him, the Prophet agrees to divorce her from him, asking her to give him back his garden. How justice religions are because they are from Allah, but people start to take what they like and abandon what they do not like. So because there are stresses on marriage from all religions to avoid sexual relations, they turn against the unmarried woman and depict her as spinster or *anas*, and the media as a window of the world, instead of correcting this constructed image, help enhancing and cultivating it.

In brief, although marriage is important and essential in all the Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to avoid *Zena* or what is termed as adultery, they, - with the exception of Judaism – do not enforce it as an obligatory. In addition, they did not reduce or low esteem the single, still-unmarried persons, Paul, in the New Testament, actually states that singleness is better as it allows one to dedicate their whole life to Allah (God).

3.3 Spinsterhood Today

In this section, the researcher investigates how the rise of national consciousness and policies have affected marriage and singleness; how international human rights law prohibits any kinds of discrimination that are based on inferiority or stereotyped roles, impacting the conception of singleness; and how popular culture and the media deal with the single woman as a spinster. It will be argued that the media offers a reflection of society, which helps to maintain a constructed reality of the single, still unmarried woman. Again, discussion will be divided into global and Egyptian sections.

3.3.A Singleness and the State

3.3.A.1 Globally:

With the rise of the system of states, governments have increasingly become actors in influencing marriage practices despite marriage's place in the personal realm. Their interest in supporting national economic growth and development leads to policies surrounding population control (eg. China), as this impacts poverty and unemployment levels as well as the demands placed on the state. The state therefore has a vested interest in the development of and forms of social structure such as marriage and families as will be explored in this section.

In his book, "The Story of Marriage and Singlehood in the World", Wafi (1987) discusses the spread of some philosophical and economic theories that encourage optional singlehood as a means to minimize population growth.

Due to the above-mentioned factors, many European peoples and others were exposed to the stop of the growing movement of the population number and its shrink, for example France after World War I. This led some governments to encourage people to marry and reproduce, making them hate singlehood through incentives for each family that is more than certain number and through taxes imposed on singles such as in Italy and Germany. However, Arab countries have not taken this approach because Islamic jurisprudence prohibits any person from being married when he is incapable of bearing its burdens. In fact, the Hadith calls those people to fast to save their virtue. In some countries, such as Germany before the World War II, those who were sick, suffering from a genetic disease, or had committed a serious crime were forced to stay single and were sterilized. This however, was very controversial: the church opposed it, and now, it is seen as a human rights violation. In the recent past, some countries, issued laws that prohibited women who work in general positions, from marrying if their marriage was seen to prevent them from performing their work effectively. This occurred, for

example, in Egypt as female teachers, working in primary schools, were prohibited to marry till a recent period (Wafi, 1987).

3.3.A.2 Egypt:

Ambassador Ayman El Kafas⁹, an official media speaker of the state, argues, (Personal Communication, April 29, 2007) that life is comprised of choices, as every person chooses their own approach to life. El Kafas adds that banning marriage for the sake of adopting family planning is something silly and is not accepted, for there are more than 500 thousand ways to control birth since the start of humanity. The pharaohs themselves adopted some methods to control birth, and even at the period of Prophet Muhammad, there were ways used such as *El Azel*¹⁰.

Even now, there are many ways to control birth without resorting to separation because the nature of human being is to marry, and there is no doubt that marriage is the natural framework for life. El Kafas states that marriage is encouraged by all religions especially Islam because it protects the person from falling in a moral mistake, and if

"I encourage people not to marry that means that I am destroying morals in society which gives the way to the spread of evil, *Zena*, and illegitimate relations. I myself cannot imagine that there is a person who can live all his life without practicing his/her natural life or natural behavior" (El Kafas, Personal Communication).

If marriage is that important, one may emphasize the significance of the challenge that faces the state in accomplishing its role of awareness in relation to marriage.

Although health research indicates the best age for marriage is starting from 20 years old, the researcher found that in 2006, the Egyptian population will reach 71,595 million, and it

⁹ H.E. Ambassador Ayman El Kafas is the Chairman of the State Information Service, Ministry of Information, which is playing a crucial role in the Awareness of any mistaken social concepts in the Egyptian society.

¹⁰ *El Azel*: pulling out before ejecting the semen to insure that the sperm does not cause pregnancy (Sheikh Ali Hafez, Personal Communication, November 6, 2007).

includes 36,507 million males, and 35,088 million females. The National Council for Women's Report on the Statistical Positions of Egyptian Women finds that the average of age of the first marriage for females has increased from 23 years old in 1991 to 26 years old in 2000. In addition, females who were unmarried in 1996 were 21.5%, a significant percent of those within marriage age. This shows that the problem is huge, as around one quarter of the Egyptian population does not have the capability to marry and practice their 'natural life'.

Also, another report titled, "The International Reports exposed the Deterioration of situations in Egypt", highlighted the growing percent of *onousa* in Egypt to unprecedented levels as it referred to a statement of Al Ahram Newspaper that there are around 9 million *anas* in the Egyptian Society. The site also highlighted that the age of marriage has raised to the age of 40 because of the high expenses of marriage and the low salary and high prices.

Another site (<http://www.alarabiya.net/Articles/2006/06/22/24995.htm>), refers in response of a news item titled "Mubarak Considered the current Year as the Year of Achievements", to the increasing percentages for the deterioration of the situation in Egypt in every field including that the *onousa* in Egypt reached 28%: about 7 million.

Moreover, according to the previous articles which referred to the same point that the average of spinsterhood or *onousa* is around 25%, this means that this phenomenon turned to be a real problem in the Egyptian society.

3.3.B Gender and Marriage in the International Human Rights Law

This section investigates some problems from the feminist point of view on human rights related to gender and marriage. Culture and religion are frequently mentioned as excuses for denying women basic rights, including rights in marriage and divorce. According to Steiner and Alston, "Customary laws and practices may conflict with prohibitions in the text of ICCPR and CEDAW or in action taken by the bodies created by these two treaties." (2000, pp. 404) In their discussion of International Human Rights Law, they explain that articles 2(f) and 5(a) of

CEDAW require states to take "all appropriate measures to modify or abolish customs, practices, and social, and cultural patterns of conduct that constitute discrimination or that are based on the idea of inferiority or on stereotyped roles for women." (Steiner & Alston, pp. 404). According to Article 16 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it says,

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. (Steiner and Alston, pp.1378).

Therefore, since marriage and making a family is essential, the society or the state should enhance it as a right for every person to obtain.

In a lecture titled, "Human Rights from an International Perspective", Ehab Gamal EL Din (2007), Director of Human Rights Affairs at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, says, "We are not from the best people or from the worst people in relation to human rights, we still have to fill the empty part of the glass, as we have many problems. We have good institutions; however, we lack the practice. We should not say that everything is fine because that will not be true." He also adds that there are many issues that are considered nil and are not related to religion absolutely; however, people because they used them several times, they believe that they are traditions and related to religion, for example circumcision. He states, "We should stand on a solid ground inside our country, revise our circumstances, and reform them." Gamal el Din (Lecture, 2007) refers to the illiteracy which huge numbers of people are suffering from, and he tackles the importance of the media to direct the society because we should reform ourselves, as we all know our problems. "We do not lack the intelligence or mind, and we have institutions." He refers to the difficult application of granting women her rights as he says, "Although Allah *Taala* in the Holy Quran has granted women her rights in relation to heritage, it may be difficult to apply these rights for example in Upper Egypt as people may be still stubborn to do that, and at many cases women do not inherit anything, as the heritage or the property, in many cases there, goes to the males of the family."

3.3.C Marriage Versus Singlehood (and/or Spinsterhood) in Popular Culture

From the numerous interviews, it has been discovered that customs and traditions have constructed the reality of the single, still-unmarried woman as an ugly, idiot, fallow spinster in which discrimination was imposed on all single women, especially in the Arab/Islamic region. No Arab/Muslim man, in this masculine society, is to be troubled by being a 'bachelor' because he is a man; he can marry at whatever age he wants to, even in his older ages because he is the only one who should start or initiate this step and not the woman; however, if a woman who is single and still-unmarried, until her thirties, to stay until that age is to be a sin, a crime, or a catastrophe that she may be committed towards herself, her family, and the society, as the surroundings start to consider her as an unsuccessful woman or a spinster.

Interviews with single, unmarried women found that the families in most of the Arab/Islamic countries first may exaggerate in their requirements from the suitor. Sometimes, when the daughter is exchanging love with someone, these families start to impose certain burdens on him, to the extent that he leaves, and then the girl's age starts to increase. Her opportunities for marriage in this older age start to be reduced, and she and her family start to make concessions that may lead her to agree to marry someone who is less financially secure than her first lover or suitor. Her family's quest for a good person in a high position with a high salary is not sensitive to whether the young woman loves him or not. Intervention of families in these Arab/Islamic societies under the name of what is called the custodian or *Al Wali* is prohibiting women in these Arab/Islamic countries, for example in the Egyptian society from practicing her legitimate right of being married, feeling safety to find a suitable person, and practicing sex in a legitimate atmosphere.

Although the custody or *Al Walaya* is mentioned in Islam, Sheikh Ali Hafez, Imam of Fatma El Zahraa Mosque (Personal Communication, May 15, 2007) blames the poor execution and application on our customs and traditions. A girl could not marry by herself or register for

marriage officially unless her custodian or *Walii* agrees. It is for this reason he believes that girls resort to the *Urfi* marriage that just needs two witnesses who will sign on a paper that she and the man who agree to marry are husband and wife. However, he adds that a woman may have her complete right to marry if her custodian or *Walii* doesn't agree 'if she chooses a good person', as well as it is forbidden or *haram* on her family to prohibit her from marrying him because of trivial reasons. Similarly, interviewed Christians who follow the same customs, related that a girl cannot marry without the approval of her family and her church, particularly her priest, for he has to accept this marriage or else no marriage will occur.

Similarly speaking out about marriage and singleness, Sheikh Amr Khaled (2004) says that spinsterhood is certainly "an awkward phenomenon that has spread throughout our Islamic society in a very disruptive and alarming rate!" (<http://www.amrkhaled.net/articles/articles757.html>). He states that this phenomenon has many 'etiological reasons' and a lot of 'intervening factors', yet the main factor, from his view, is 'poverty'. The problem starts from the failure to buy an apartment, furnish it, to offer a dowry in addition to the hope to an expensive wedding. Thus, he echoes Sheikh Ali Hafez in his call for people not to be a prisoner of traditional ways of thinking and abandon any thought that is not common. He believes that the solution is through religion as it can "help build more positivity and optimism in our environment instead of the miserable reality we are facing!" (Khaled, 2007).

Interviews with men demonstrated that it is not merely the family of the daughter that interferes for the sake of the bride, but also the groom's family, as they fear that the bride's family is greedy, and trying to impose exaggerated requirements on their son. This is something similar to Huntington's Clash of Civilizations, a 'Clash of Families' if you will. Both families start to challenge each other until the groom seeking another bride, and the woman is left with a broken heart waiting for another opportunity that may come or not. Most of the time, other suitors do not like to marry a girl who has already been engaged because she may have

spent time with that previous man in public or kissed or hugged him. Many Eastern men cannot bear the idea that their wife may have been touched by another man before them.

Nashae Said, a psychiatrist (Personal Communication, February 18th, 2007), says that girls are proud of themselves in a certain age when they start to transfer from a girl like to a woman like, so they refuse this person or that because they do not see him as the 'hero on the horseback' they are dreaming of. They may wish for a very handsome, self-confident, man who has a high level of education and good position, or wealth. They may take time until they chose their man from the suitors asking for their hands in order to achieve their psychological acceptance of the other (Said, 2007). Said adds that sometimes their age escapes them in these 'closed' Arab/Islamic countries. As an example mentioned by Khaled Abd El Wahab, a groom addressed a family to marry its daughter, and he suffered from their treatment because his educational degree is lower than the bride. He compared the woman to a villa or flat saying, "no one will ask to marry her (like the flat: no one will buy) unless he wants her or it, and at the end she may stay unmarried (like the flat with no settler)". One may perceive, from that simile how woman is treated or to be considered in a masculine society like Egypt. This type of behaviour also points towards the misapplication of religion, many in the Arab/Islamic societies do not apply Prophet Muhammad's Hadith: "If a good person, of whom you are satisfied with his religion and manners, come asking to marry your daughter, marry him to your daughter, for if you do not do this, impiety will occur in the land and great corruption."

3.3.D Marriage Versus Singlehood (and/or Spinsterhood) in Film

The media, including movies, offers us a reflection of society, demonstrating common cultural behaviors and belief systems and reinforcing them. A movie titled *Ashtibah* or "Suspicion" (1991), acted by Naglaa Fathy and directed by Alaa Karim, represents the vacuum and futility that society suffers from when an 'innocent woman' is accused of committing adultery. Viewers see how their society is antagonistic and unsympathetic with the heroine,

Nadia, as even her family sees her as a criminal who committed adultery. The movie shows how powerful the media are in shaping people's perceptions, and that people usually trust what they hear from the media above their own family and friends. This movie also shows how our society and the media represent a pressuring influence on women.

The Egyptian movie *Film Hendi* or "Hindi Movie" (2003), by Monir Rady, tackles some of the things that prohibit and hinder marriage in the Egyptian society, for both Muslims and Christians. The film depicts how women may accept marriage in order to escape the pressure of the society on her as a single woman, and it shows the female character was forced to get engaged to the character in the movie although she sees him as a fat and ugly man. It also shows the economic problems that face youth. This movie with its characters is considered to be a reflection to what usually happens in the Egyptian society for either Muslims or Christians. There is no real commitment for marriage for both males and females. No one is responsible because there is no punishment applied to strength commitment. For instance, a man or a woman may love each other and goes out together; then, suddenly, they break the relation because there is another person who may be better. This movie offers great evidence on how the Egyptian society pursues and seeks hasty or superficial marriages instead of true love. Apartment, furniture, *Shabka* or the gold gift become more important than the presence of love. Unfortunately, apart of religions, existence of truth, trust, honesty, and fulfillment of promises and commitments are rare in that society in relation to marriage from both sex. There is no issued law prohibit a male or a female from withdrawing from a relation. In all three Abrahamic religions, in this case explored with Islam and Christianity, truth is one of the most important characteristics. Both men and women should not deceive their partners, and must demonstrate commitment. Unfortunately, commitment is lacking in society because many people focus only on appearance, and are not fully honest with themselves or their partners.

3.4 Previous Studies on Marriage and Singleness and Role of Media in Perpetuating Stereotypes

In this section, the researcher will refer to previous studies that tackle marriage and singlehood focusing on *onousa* or spinsterhood phenomenon, and how this phenomenon forms a pressure on the neck of every woman in the society. She will divide this section into four subdivisions: the first is tackling the importance of marriage and the problem of singlehood in general and spinsterhood in particular within the society. The second tackles the stereotypes and counter stereotypes of media in previous studies. Then, the role of media in tackling that issue and how the media especially drama stereotypes single, still-unmarried women as spinster. Most probably, the singlehood issue when tackled is usually tackled as spinsterhood and not bachelorhood; finally, what should be the role of the media?

3.4.A Previous Studies on Marriage and Singlehood (and Spinsterhood):

Because research is rare on the image of single women as spinsters in Egypt, the researcher will investigate previous sociological studies that focus on the importance of marriage in addition to singleness globally and nationally, as well as how spinsters were stereotyped in film globally and nationally.

3.4.A.1 Social-Psychology Studies

In "Family Values Between Fundamentalism and Contemporary Society", El Safsafi Ahmed El Morsy (2001) defines marriage as an integration of relations that are established for the intention of making a new family from either a male or a female. He sees marriage as the second stage of life following the birth stage, and that it is an important event for both men and women, as it is considered to be the start of establishing a family. He suggests that marriage is important in all religions and cultures, and highlights the priority of marriage in Eastern societies and Islam as they both support the institution of marriage. He suggests that even the

cultural heritage of this society insists on marriage: it is the social glue that cements connections between families, and parents have a duty to support their sons to get married. He does not refer to spinsters in his book but to the importance of marriage to the extent that he represent it as the second stage in life after birth. He does not show that there are others who have the choice to be single.

In her book *Marriage and Family Relations*, Sanaa El Kholy (1995) explains that people marry for many reasons: to exchange love with another person, for economic security and an independent home, to give birth and raise children, to avoid loneliness or escape from the parents home, to fulfill sexual desires, for protection, or to attain a certain social position, among other reasons. She also explains that marriage is the accepted social form; in a gender-segregated culture one of the only legitimate ways to establish a relationship between sexes is through marriage. She highlights that some marriages occur due to different pressures; however, these pressures are lessening in contemporary society as it is becoming less accepted to compel youth to get married. However, pressures still exist in their more subtle forms: many people get married because their peers have done it, and they do not want to be alone or left behind. El Kholy (1995) points out that as a result, many fail to find a partner that they feel truly well-matched with and end up settling for a spouse that their families, peers or they themselves consider to be the best candidate even if they do not meet all their ideals.

In Egypt, people generally have the ability to choose their partner: either the same age, older, or younger. According to Egyptian law, the legal age of marriage is 18 for men and 16 for women. She notes that there has been an increase in the average age of marriage in recent years due to large-scale socio-cultural changes. This is particularly true in urban areas, and is likely connected to the increasing levels of education being sought, coupled with the need for financial independence before entering into marriage. It is for this reason, she argues, the age range for marriage has increased to reach 23-28 for women and 27-34 for men. Due to the equality of men

and women, and increasing opportunities for women in fields that were previously restricted to men, El Kholy (1995) predicts that gender roles within the marriage may change, and lead to growing numbers of 'house-husbands' an increase in divorce rates, decrease of birth rates, and a continued increase in average marriage age for women because they are keen to study. In relation to equality between male and female, one may think that such connotations that women are labeled by, such as the word 'spinster', should be changed because of women's changing roles.

In *Choice for Marriage and the Social Change*, Samia Hassen El Saaty (1981) says that marriage is a universal social system that achieves a permanent relationship between a man and a woman. This system springs from customs more than being sprung from biology. She states that women feel more social and emotional pressures for marriage than men because their upbringings are more connected to the family, and marriage is viewed as a powerful evidence on their maturity, as well as giving them privileges over others who have not married.

Statistically speaking, marriage is natural, 90% of the people who live until the age of 50 or more marry; however, the presence of a certain quantity of singlehood is something natural; "Most of the people marry, and marriage is a natural thing, but this doesn't mean that there is deficiency in the person who doesn't marry" (El Saaty, 1981 pp 21). We should not consider any person who doesn't marry as unusual, or somehow deficient, because we know and expect that some people will not marry. The most important choice is the choice of partner, as this decision impacts the remainder of a person's life. This decision to marry, she suggests, is influenced to a large degree by one's culture, traditions, and perhaps nature.

There are many proverbs that encourage marriage and support its value, such as "The least man may enrich women", and "the shadow of a man is better than the shadow of the wall" (El Saaty, 1981, pp. 289). It is seen as extremely important for a woman to marry because marriage is viewed as a shelter that saves her honor, and her husband as her support and protector. El Saaty asserts that any woman who is late to marry, whether in urban or rural areas,

reduces her self-esteem and value, and is described by others as a "fallow" or *bayera*. *Bayera* is an unjust connotation that depicts single woman. There is also a proverb that speaks to this: "*El Bayera* is better to stay at her father's home" (El Saaty, pp. 289). However, she suggests that in the past there was no difference between the urban and rural girl, but the situation is changing now with rising education levels.

In "Nuptiality in Arab Countries: Changes and Implications", Hoda Rashad and Magued Osman (2001) present a regional analysis of transformation taking place in the prevalence, timing, and characteristics of marriages in Arab countries. The researchers find that delay in marriage is supported by the "decrease in proportion married by age 20, while the increase in celibacy is indicated by the change in the percentage of females not married by age 30-39." (Rashad & Osman, 2001, pp.25) According to the table shown in the study, the percent of women married by age 20 in many countries has decreased. For example the marriage rate for women aged 25 has decreased in Egypt, from 64.8% to 41.4% between "25 years ago" and "recently between 1992-96". At the same time, the percent of unmarried female ages 30-39 has increased. (Rashad & Osman, 2001)

The researchers highlight three stages within their study: stage one represents the non-European model of early and universal marriage, stage two represents a transitional model where marriage is late but universal, and stage three follows the Western/European model. Egypt with its long history of women's education and productive employment remains in stage one experiencing the non-European model of early and universal marriage. The authors explain that these stages are connected to female literacy: countries in stage three have a higher female literacy levels¹¹ while countries in stage one have much lower literacy levels¹². Thus, their results support the role of education in delaying marriage, as they discover that chances for uneducated women being married at ages 20-24 are around two times higher than their educated

¹¹ 90% in Lebanon, 79% in Jordan, 75% in Kuwait, and 63% in Libya (Rashad & Osman, 2001, pp 25)

¹² 46% in Oman, 39% in Egypt, and 39% in Yemen (Rashad and Osman, 2001, pp 25)

counterparts. Significantly, they observe that in Egypt, both uneducated and educated women have approximately the same low levels of celibacy. Small changes in the model of marriage in Egypt are not held to the uneducated because higher education women pass by the same low levels of celibacy as the less educated. One may consider this is a result of the start of single women, who are scared to be identified as spinsters, to worry about their situation, which may lead them to make concessions in their choice of husband to keep away from being labeled as *anas*. They also find that delays in marriage in Egypt are distinguished only after achieving the secondary education. They highlight that the nature of marriage changes taking place in the Arab countries propose that a larger percentage of women may live in permanent celibacy. As the researcher has found in her own study, Rashad and Osman indicate there is a scarcity of available data on single women, and therefore further research is imperative.

In the UNIFEM study "The Jordanian Women Conditions Report: Demographic, Economic and Political Participation, and Violence against Women", (2004) it shows gender discrepancy in the age at which people get married. The mean of age for married males for the first time has increased three years from 26 years old in 1979 to 29 years old in 2002, with 13%; whereas, the mean of age for married females for the first time has increased six years from 21 years old in 1979 to 27 years old in 2002, with 27%. The report mentions that the increase in the mean of age of both males and females are related to several social and economic factors: the increase in the expenses of marriage, the cost of living, and family establishment requirements in comparison with the lower economic conditions of the family. Also, the report points out the trend to continue education for longer years for females as another factor, as well as the development of women participation in the economic action which lead her to chose her husband freely at the suitable time.

In a study by Magued Osman and Laila Shahd (2001), "Age-Discrepant Marriage in Egypt", they point out that nuptiality trends in the last twenty years show an increase in the age

of marriage among Egyptian females. They underline that this change in marriage age is a result of the increase in female education and/or economic hardship that may be observed in most Arab countries. They refer to the slight changes in the age difference between spouses, during the last three decades, that has appeared from the statistics on the average age at marriage by gender. They highlight the continuation of the universal pattern of men choosing to marry younger women, however they also find a new trend: a considerable increase in the number of older wife/younger husband marriages. This is often the case as older women become more desperate to marry, selecting a husband from the lower socioeconomic status of the middle class because of the societal pressure on her to marry (Osman & Shahd, 2001)¹³.

The study investigates the reasons for this age gap, finding it is combined with an educational and occupational gap. The authors find a larger educational gap between older wife and the younger husband, for 16.9% are professionals married to workers. For example, there is a marriage registration contract where the wife is an older journalist and the husband is a younger merchant of vegetables. Another marriage contract shows that the wife is a university professor, whereas the husband holds an intermediate industrial school degree (Osman & Shahd, 2001).

In "The Cost of Marriage in Egypt: A Hidden Variable in the New Arab Demography", Diane Singerman and Barbara Ibrahim (2001) stress the importance of marriage as a central event in Egyptians' lives. Although other demographers examine factors such as increased female education, labor force participation, the researchers here hypothesize that price of marriage plays a superior role in delaying marriages than has previously been hypothesized. They consider marriage as a "major economic project", explaining that Egyptians waste more than 13 billion Egyptian pounds per year on the costs of marriage. Therefore, like others, they note the trend in

¹³ Osman and Shahd find that ma'zouns – marriage registrars - explain that women who marry younger men are usually between 30 and 55 years old, whereas the men are between 22 and 28 years old. "This woman might be **single** having passed the socially accepted age" and seek to overcome the "great social pressure against single women and fulfill her own psychological needs of having a partner" [emphasis added]. They suggest that this is occurring because of the economic hardships the groom faces to marry a girl younger than him, while an older woman will not require a dowry, relieving him of the financial burden.

many Arab countries toward later marriages and an increase in singleness and celibacy due to the high costs of marriage. As described in discussions about singleness and the state, this trend is welcomed by demographers and policymakers, as they face the growing population.

Singerman and Ibrahim (2001) highlight alternative models that are being explored within Egypt. They discuss the role played by NGOs in Egypt, inventing alternatives to the traditional marriage including ways to reduce the high costs such as innovation of mass ceremonies. Additionally, they cite religious groups have encouraged the notion of marriages stood only on symbolic exchanges of material goods and low bride cost. Finally, they describe '*Urfi*' or common-law marriages as becoming increasingly popular, especially among educated youth. These unregistered and secretive marriages carry a social stigma yet they are popular because this type of marriage reduces expenses while still meeting the minimum requirements for marriage under Islamic law. However, the majority of Egyptians still abide by the publicly approved marriage, following the norm. (Singerman & Ibrahim, 2001).

Another study by Philippe Fargues (2001) entitled, "Terminating Marriage", points out that universal developments such as mass education and urbanization have lead to delay the age of marriage, and consequently "turned upside down a whole equilibrium which previously depended on early marriage" (pp. 247). However, he believes that marriage is the only way to free a person from the family of birth and allow independence. He refers to the increase of age of marriage of woman at the first time of marriage everywhere during the second half of the 20th century. He explains that the average age of first marriage between the 1930s and the 1990s in Egypt has moved from 18.7 to 21.9 years old for females and from 25.7 to 28.4 for males. He also refers to the drop of age of marriage as 98.8% of males and 98.7% of females born in 1942-1951 have been married at least once. However, at the start of the 1990s, the "total nuptiality rate" (TNR) has reached 90.2% for men, but only 78.7% for women, demonstrating that 21.3% of women never marry. This depicts an exceptional departure from family customs. There are

also indications that two developments will occur in Arab societies: a delay of the first marriage and reduction of its final frequency (Fargues, 2001).

The author focuses his investigation on the rise of female celibacy, explaining: "the surplus of women to marry, produced by an important age interval between spouses, add[s] to a declining capacity of divorce and polygamy to reabsorb that surplus." (Fargues, 2001, pp. 267) He raises a crucial question: "which of the two rules will bend first: that which establishes the universality of marriage, in which case for the first time it is women who will remain single during their lifetime, or that which favors the age difference between spouses, in which case the conjugal [matrimonial] union will move towards more equality between spouses, with regard to age at least." In either scenario, He predicts a sociological change. As other studies have already discussed, some change is already occurring: older women are increasingly marrying younger men, however, singleness is not yet acceptable in the Egyptian society. On a deeper level, real sociological change is not occurring as the structure of society continues to place pressure on women to marry, now even if the marriage is not beneficial to the woman.

In a study titled, "Marriage Delayed or Marriage Forgone? New Cohort Forecasts of First Marriage for U.S. Women", Goldstein and Kenney (2001) refer to the constant decline in marriage rates in the US. They present the debate among social scientists over whether Americans are withdrawing from marriage in general or just delaying their marriages to older ages. They indicate that in every culture a sort of marriage exists and the majority of adults are expected to marry. They also consider the recent decline in marriage rates as one of the huge social changes in industrial countries. They refer to some theories of marriage that clarify why people marry, as they tackle marriage from two different points, the first is the one that depict marriage as a "social institution" that answers the social norms commitments, while the second is the "rational choice" or decision taken by the persons themselves who measure the benefits of being married than staying single.

Although the institutional theory supports the family as a whole and encourage norms and values, the economic theory of marriage (by Becker) focuses on why people "choose to marry at all" (Goldstein and Kenney, 2001). The authors conclude that marriage as a "social institution" has witnessed lots of changes recently, for women's median age at first marriage has increased by 4 years in the last three decades. They highlight that men and women are marrying later than what they used to do in the past. Their finding shows that women with higher education are likely to marry more than those with less education which contradicts with earlier results of Bennett et al.(1989). The authors state that the more the productivity of women, the more the gains from marriage increase, as men may benefit from their high educated wives. Finally, the authors suggest the emergence of marriage rate differentials not only just between blacks and whites but also by socioeconomic status. They also suggest that women with high education are predictable to marry more than ever, while those with less education are increasingly liable to remain single.

The results of this study contradicts with Rashad and Osman study which suggests that chances for uneducated women being married are around two times higher than their educated counterparts. This may be due to the cultural differences between both societies, as Eastern males prefer to marry women who are less than them to have the superiority, and be able to dominate them.

In "Major trends affecting families in the new millennium –Western Europe and North America", Robert Cliquet (2003) highlights the significant changes in family structures and dynamics such as, smaller family sizes, a change from "extended to nuclear families", a decrease in nuptiality, the emergence of new types of combinations such as unmarried cohabitation or 'living-apart-together'. The study demonstrates that age at the first marriage in Western Europe for women below 50 stands at an average of 28 years. The author illustrates that delayed marriage in both Western Europe and North America is progressively more

substituted or preceded by cohabitation or "living-apart-together". He points out that nuptiality has diminished significantly in most countries due to the delay of the first marriage. The author also highlights the impact of globalization on family structures and dynamics in developed countries and how modernization may influence and affect people's behavior.

Globalization may have consequences where people in society especially the vulnerable groups may consider as a threat. In addition, it increases international competition in different societal fields such as, economic production and commerce which may lead to phenomena such as instability of jobs and unemployment. The author also points out that recent trends of different demographic indicators of household life may demonstrate that traditional family is about to disappear, as nuptiality and fertility are declining, while consensual unions, cohabitation or living-apart-together relationships, and single person households are increasing. The study also tackles celibacy as a phenomenon that was not odd in conditions of pre-modern culture for different economic, biological, and ideological reasons. Although surveys has found that those who adopt celibacy are forming a minority, the researcher here predicts that persistence of celibacy will continue because several persons may still regarding it as their "conscious choice" (Cliquet, 2003).

Nancy S. Landale and Katherine Fennelly (1992) intend in their investigation to compare the characteristics of women who are single and women who are lawfully married, to evaluate whether Puerto Rican women name their informal unions as nonmarital cohabitation (living-apart-together) or a sort of marriage. Marriage is no longer considered a precondition to live with a partner. Although other studies considered cohabitation as an alternative to being single, their findings in this study demonstrate that among Puerto Ricans, informal unions are more similar to marriage than singlehood (Landale & Fennelly, 1992).

In a study by Nazek Nosseir (2003) tackling the major trends that affect families in North Africa, She says that the family has always been the central element of the social structure in

the traditional Arab society. She adds that the situation of the families requires examination due to the significant changes especial in social organization occurred in the region. For the aim of this paper, the author will study the family in the North African region in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan. In addition to the trends affecting the families in the region, she will also investigate new challenges that may be facing this region. She states that one of the major trends that affects the families in the region is the shifts in family structure including, smaller family sizes, marriage delayed age at first marriage and its impact on childbearing, polygamy, shift in divorce rates, and the increase in single parenthood. Nosseir (2003) states that marriage remains as a basic social institution although the change in its structure. She states that women are getting married at older age which affects their fertility level; therefore, they give birth to fewer children. She mentions some reasons for delayed marriages such as education and joining the labor force.

In a study conducted by Saad Gadalla (1994), the author's main objective is to identify the cultural norms about reproduction in a rural community in Egypt. He states that early marriage for females is a cultural custom that deeply rooted in Egyptian villages adding that this norm will not change except if some strong social forces are established into rural cultural to change the perception of late marriages for girls to be more desirable. The author indicates that this social forces must conquer certain basic convictions. These convictions or beliefs are including: first, fear from involvement of their daughters in premarital sexual relations; second, marriage and childbearing are the most important role in women's life, and there is no advantage from keeping them unmarried; third, a popular belief that girls who marry earlier stay younger for a long time than who marry older (Gadalla, 1994).

In her research "Contemporary Spinsters in the New Millennium: Changing Notions of Family and Kinship", Roona Simpson (2003) distinguishes the term 'spinster' from the 'ever married', and she uses the word 'single' when mentioning studies that contains the widowed

and/or divorced. She highlights the problematic discourse of the available terminologies that describe the never-married women. "[T]erms such as spinster, old maid, celibate may nowadays be viewed negatively or be inaccurate" (Simpson, p.7).

Turning to psychological studies that expose the impact of singlehood, Robin Simon and Kristen Marcussen (1999) examine the effects of marital status- losses and gains, and they find that depression is less with married people than with unmarried ones. Their results show that "a marital loss results in increased symptoms, while a marital gain results in decrease symptoms" (Simon and Marcussen, pp.111).

Susan Faludi (1991) states that dozens of news features, guidance books, and women's health journals have indicated that single women have suffered from "record levels of depression", and professional women were exhausted by a syndrome that allegedly lead to a large series of psychological and physical illnesses starting from fainting to heart attacks. Thus, the 1980s has witnessed an increasing psychological distress of single women, as Annette Baran (1986) emphasizes that single women now form the huge number of any psychotherapist's practice, with 66%. Faludi also refers to Janice Lieberman's statement "These women come into treatment convinced there's something terribly wrong with them." Lieberman also emphasizes, "Being single too long is traumatic." (Faludi, pp.35).

In an article titled, "Will Marriage Vanish from the World?" in an Islamic site called, "Dr. Dawoud Site", Dr. Fekry Abd El Aziz, a psychiatrist, emphasizes that marriage to a woman is the safety element, and woman will feel psychological pains especially from the society view, if she loses that safety element. Sometimes, she may feel undesirable from the society, and some may feel depression. Abd El Aziz adds "Woman in her nature tends to marriage, and home (family making), and if this did not happen, she may feel pain, even if she is acquiring all the comfortable means such as cars, villas, extra." Dr. Abd El Aziz discovers,

from a study which he carries out, that if the divorced woman is a loser, the spinster or *anas* woman will be observed as the loosest on the social level.

3.4.A.2 Mass Media and Movie Stereotype Studies

Many studies, have focused on stereotypical representation of minorities including, ethnicity, gender, religion, poverty, elders. In this subdivision, the author will tackle some of the previous media, especially movie, studies that show bias, subjectivity, or stereotypical representations against some groups or minorities, such as women in general and single women in particular.

Nabil Ragheb (2000) refers to the stereotypes often used in the Egyptian film industry for the sake of humor and comedy such as the tyrant or frustrated woman. He also tackles different stereotypical themes such as rape and adultery, tragedies of prostitutes, *Urfi* and secret marriages.

The Egyptian Mass Media disregard the singlehood problem, limiting it to the spinsterhood phenomenon. Egyptian films have historically and continue to construct the single, unmarried woman as a spinster through three specific stereotypes: An ugly horrible woman who is desperate to get married, for example the two sisters-in-law who envied the young bride in the movie: *Where is My Lifetime?* or *Ayn Omry?*; a caricatured or exaggerated image of the *anas* woman that others should laugh at, as typified by actress Zenat Sedky, in movies like *Love Street* or *Sharaa El Hob*, and *Ibn Hamido* , or a pitiful woman who is a disgrace as Sanaa Gamil in *Bedayia We Nehayia* or a burden to her family because she has not married early like in *Ahl El Qema*, acted by Soad Hosni.

Not only the Egyptian drama has demonstrated the reality of the spinster as an ugly, idiotic one, globally speaking, and despite the cultural differences between the spinster in this context and the spinster in the West who could be a mother living alone, or a daughter caring of her old father as "much research on 'single' women includes the 'ever married' such as the

widowed and divorced". Spinsters' image in the American drama is much worse, as in "Saints or Sinners? The image of Social Workers From American Stage and Cinema Before World War II, Catherine Hiersteiner (1998) says "there is only one unlikable character in the story... Alice Simpson", who was characterized "as a tall spare spinster". She says that Simpson was depicted as frigid, cold, dominant, and anti-Semitic. Hiersteiner (1998) adds that this character is created from "class and gender bias for dramatic effect, and her image remains as a core stereotype in the media even today".

In "Spinster: An Evolving Stereotype Revealed Through Film", Deborah J. Mustard (2000) refers to the modern American culture which has developed generations of women who consider marriage and having children is their principal task in life. The author adds that some major movies have continued to use the stereotype of women in the late 40's and early 50's. However, recently, due to the diminish of the traditional household and the emergence of other "acceptable life choices", there is a change in the cultural perceptions of the single, still unmarried women. The author refers to the movie production which has reflected this change with new stereotypes that portray this cultural movement. she adds that the change in our perception of spinsters is the focus of current academic research. She states, "although the way our culture perceives spinsters and the way the film industry portrays them may be evolving, we still are still left with a negative stereotype." Mustard refers to the movie, *Now, Voyager* (1942), and how Bette Davis acts the role of Charlotte Vale, the troubled, unmarried daughter, and from Charlotte's first appearance, the viewers will immediately get the idea of whom she is. The author says,

She fits the classic stereotyped image of a spinster and we have compartmentalized her as such in our minds before she has a chance to speak her first line. Charlotte is dressed in a drab, ill-fitting dress; her hair is pulled back in a bun; and she wears old-fashioned, wire-framed spectacles. Her presence screams "spinster": her demeanor seems mousy, her eyes are cast down, and she is constantly wringing her hands as if she is uncomfortable with herself. Obviously, there is something abnormal about her entire demeanor.

In addition, Mustard shows the framing of unmarried women as spinster, such as *The African Queen* (1951), *Marvin's Room* (1996), a new version of the spinster as caretaker stereotype. She also refers to how the stereotype of spinster has been commonly understood to be related to females, and the word "Bachelor" which is related to males entails that a man is "young, virile, and available." The word 'bachelor' doesn't have the same negative implications as that of 'spinster.' There is a pressure practiced on women to marry, raise families, and accomplish the American dream. The author highlights O'Brien's words (1973) that it was acceptable for single women to work, but it was not acceptable to live single, unmarried. The author also refers to different psychological characteristics associated with the spinster stereotype such as, being abnormal, pitiful, unfulfilled, and suspect.

Mustard ends her study by saying that the "struggle for single women to become a respected part of society has been going on for centuries...Even though there has been a shift in our perception of this creature, the spinster, we still are not comfortable with her." (2000, <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/sfischo/spinster.html>) This is due to the suspicion of female independence. Mustard concludes that movie stereotype of single women is more negatively than before: "We've seen the spinster step out of her role and gain independence, but Hollywood has not quite decided if she is still benign or will become a more menacing icon."

Revisiting the spinsterhood issue by Florence King (1993), she depicts those who are still-unmarried women as being 'true feminists' (as mentioned later by Mustard, 2000). King says, "Spinsterhood was powerful long before feminism hit the fan." She says that unlike the majority of "married women with children are no use to anybody unless the stock exchange is hiring amok runners", these spinsters gave women a good name. Thus, remove the discrimination against them, King recommends that feminists should encourage using the title **spinster** and to be included in applications for those who have chosen the singlehood or the

unmarried life instead of using the title **Ms.** which hides their marital status (King 1993). Unlike married women who may sacrifice their life, freedom, and everything for being bind to their husbands and children, King sees that single, still-unmarried women are, freely, capable of making their own choices without any marriage burdens, as she says, "He travels fastest who travels alone, and that goes double for she".

Susan Faludi (1991) has referred to the backlash against women's rights in American history, and she describes it as being not new. She mentions typical themes for women being depicted by Hollywood in the 1980s, such as

women were set against women; women's anger at their social circumstances was depoliticized and displayed as personal depression instead; and women's lives were framed as morality tales in which the "good mother" wins and the independent woman gets punished.

She indicates that the movie industry has had the power to drive these lessons to home strongly than the media. Filmmakers are not controlled by the requirements of journalism, and they could shape their fictional women the way they desire. (Faludi, 1991). Referring to the shifts in the media and movie industry, she indicates that single woman who celebrated finding independence, and how women started to change their conventional roles (pp. 95); however, being depressed without love or man has been described as the high price of independence, as she sees these consequences as misleading to single women, "We were never told, 'while you're climbing up the corporate ladder, do not forget to pick up a husband and child.'" (pp. 97) Deborah J. Mustard commenting on this, she says, "This puts us right back into the age-old stereotype of spinster: no man, no children, no fulfillment" (Mustard, 2000).

In "The Impact of Factual Versus Fictional Media Portrayals on Cultural Stereotypes", Sheila T. Murphy (1998) investigates how factual and fictional media depictions may stimulate culturally stereotypes and affect consequent judgments concerning members of stereotyped groups. She states that nowhere else except in the mass media that minorities and women are

viewed partially and incomplete. She refers to the overrepresentation of men, while women are depicted as passive, overemotional, and dependent on men. She also refers to a similar problem that portrays African Americans as drug-traffickers or criminals.

Murphy presents the change from stereotypic depictions of women, ethnic minorities, and other stigmatized groups to counter stereotypic images that counter the cultural stereotype. She refers to what Hewstone labels "as "disconfirming information" that directly contradicts the prevailing stereotype." (pp.167). That is to say, disconfirming cultural stereotypes, and subsequently, the prejudice that frequently attaches to them will shrink. She concludes her study by a group of recommendations: notifying both mass media producers and consumers of the potential impact of stereotypic images; circumventing the inducement to focus on the so-called positive elements of ethnic and gender stereotypes; encouraging studios, networks, and newspapers to include more depictions that confront the cultural stereotype; avoiding counter-stereotypic prototypes that are different; finally, including factual as well as fictitious counter-stereotypic examples.

In "Women's Depiction by Mass Media", Gaye Tuchman (1979) says that the emerging women's movement has tackled the relationship between representations of women in the mass media and their social roles. She explains that some feminists call to delete media stereotypes from their shared perception of gender roles and stratification. She refers to the content of the media, which distorts women's position in the social world, and how the media encourage both males and females to identify women in men's terms (as sex items) or in the framework of the family (as house caretaker and raising children). The author says that the extremely under-representation of women as well as their stereotypic depiction may confine the status of women in the American society. These findings go alongside with the muted group theory which previously mentioned that the male, dominator group, may have the greatest effect; whereas,

the female group will be dominated by this group to be either muted or even adopts what this male group says.

According to Arlene K. Daniels' article (1979) titled, "Comment on Tuchman's 'Women's Depiction by Mass Media'", she comments saying that women are depicted in TV commercials as major characters. However, the voice of power is that of the male "voice-over" in the background to influence the way of thinking. She puts the responsibility on media to present an accurate picture of the world.

Daniels (1979) highlights her discussions with media persons who express that they present the world as they see it without bias or favoring to any sex. She sees that their sincerity is not doubted. However, they view the world controlled by existing shibboleths and principles. She refers to Tuchman's words, "women may also present sexist perspectives in the media, for they may share the priorities, preferences, and world views of their male counterparts" (Daniels, pp. 811). She adds that the most important role of feminist research on media has been to demonstrate how portrayals come to mirror the stereotypes that place women in secondary positions without considering the conscious impetus of presenters.

In "Coming Soon to a Station near You?: The CRTC Policy on Sex-Role Stereotyping", Linda Trimble (1990) introduces the problem of stereotypical depictions of women in the broadcast media in Canada. She refers to the Canadian women's movement that attacks the images of women on radio and television. This feminist movement has protested these depictions in the 1970s, and viewed the mass media as an easily influenced agent of social change. The movement calls the government to obligate media industry to promote equal and progressive descriptions of women. For the sake of Equality, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has to help the broadcasting and advertising industries in developing strategies for the removal of sex-role stereotyping.

Trimble (1990) states that the Department of Communications was instructed to form a monitoring group which would punish and put pressure on anchors and advertisers. The commission has concluded that the sex-role stereotyping scheme has shown success, and that a great progress has undergone to reduce the most insulting types of sex-role stereotyping and to guarantee that women obtain equal access to all sectors of the TV industry (Trimble, 1990).

In "The Media: Obstacle or Ally of Feminists?" Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) raise a question: "Why are men and women treated differently by the press?" Their answer comes that these differences are "based on reporters' and editors' expectations or stereotypes about men and women candidates" (Kahn & Goldenberg, pp. 111). Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) conclude that increasing the number of female reporters could help women candidates because they are more likely than males to talk about female issues among the voters. However, the authors indicate that this attractive strategy cannot be effective immediately.

Based on this study, the researcher may suggest that increasing the number of female directors in the cinema may be helpful to talk about female issues such as singlehood and not to stereotype the unmarried woman image as a spinster. In addition, they may try to construct a reality that mirror the truth versus the reality the male, the dominated group tries to construct. Female directors should represent the reality of the successful part of single women to confront the male dominant agenda instead of accepting it mutely. In other words, reconstruct new objective images that depict females especially single women based on the truth and the new roles of women recently.

From a lesson titled, Stereotyping Arabs and Muslims, (<http://www.ithaca.edu/looksharp/U4L2guide.pdf>), the writer (2005) refers to the definition of TheFreeDictionary.com of the word stereotype which means, "a conventional formulaic and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image" (pp. 2). Whenever stereotypes of a certain group or minority increase, it is more preferable to confront these distorted images by what is suggested as 'a counter-

stereotype', which is defined as "the reverse of a stereotype or simply an individual who doesn't conform to stereotypes. It can also be opposition to the process of stereotyping." (pp. 2). Therefore, it may be suggested, within the context of this study, to counter these stereotypes of single women through mirroring their reality in an objective and accurate way instead of what is available in drama nowadays. Single women are not desperate characters but successful ones who are enthusiastic to achieve progress and success in life.

In "Women, Media and Democratic Society: in Pursuit of Rights and Freedoms", Margaret Gallagher (2002) highlights that media depictions especially of women are deeply rooted in political and economic contexts. She says that findings of current studies show higher variety in women's roles and a retreat from the subordinate housewife-mother image. She says:

Images of the 'new woman' as an independent consumer whose femininity remains intact, or as a hard-headed individualist, whose feminine side must be sacrificed, illustrate new stereotypes of women whose 'femaleness' is always the core issue" (Gallagher, pp.11).

She refers to the need of a social and political transformation that grants women their rights, for example their right to communicate, and how these rights should be respected and implemented in the society and by the media.

She also refers to the underrepresentation or misrepresentation of women who are not members of the dominant prevailing national culture. She mentions that a study of TV news, drama, and sitcoms in Malaysia has concluded that major ethnic groups were represented; whereas, minority ethnic groups were marginalized (Gallagher, 2002).

In "Negative Forces and Positive Non-Entities: Images of Women in the Dramas of Amiri Baraka", Sandra L. Richards (1982) says that the dramas of Amiri Baraka, the leading playwright of the decade 1964-1974, is characterized by "arresting imagery, humorous but painful irony." She says that although Baraka was the father of the Black Arts movement, and his writings show how culture could be an effective weapon in an emancipation struggle, he ignores the reality that his dramaturgy is almost tremendously "male-dominated and woman-hating."

Richards (1982) clarifies this hatred in Baraka's dramas by dividing women in his dramas into three wide classifications: "the evil white woman who is aggressively independent of everyone; the neurotic black woman who consciously wills her own destruction; and the black or white woman who is a paragon of political virtue" (pp. 234). She concludes that Baraka's depiction of woman indicates that writers should not do the same as him; however, she does not neglect that he is not the only one in constructing a collection of images that shows a deep-rooted antagonism to women. The study ends by recommending a process that completely shifts our perceptions because "We expect in our literature an honesty which will mirror the reality of our lives" (Richards, pp. 240).

As previously mentioned, one may recommend the importance of mirroring single women as what the reality is because they are not those who still wait or keen to obtain a groom as in the past to fulfill their previous traditional roles – marry and raise children, but unmarried women recently focus on their modern roles – education and work.

3.4.A.3 Journalists' Perceptions of Singlehood

This subdivision tackles Egyptian media's depiction of single, still-unmarried women by male/female journalists relating the problem to spinsterhood (or portraying unmarried women as spinsters) not singlehood for both males and females, although the problem of late marriage is related to both sexes.

Mohamed Abd El Aaty, a journalist, (2007), refers in his article to the concern about the increase of spinsterhood rates because Egyptians spend 3.8 Billion \$ annually on marriage. he adds that a Newsweek report states that most of these expenses are on the shoulders of the groom, and the increase in the *onousa* rates has become a bomb due to the expenses that have increased twice and unemployment. Youth faces precarious financial obstacles in the Middle East that impede their marriage.

In "Tourism in Hurghada is the Reason of our Daughters' Spinsterhood", Mohamed El Said (2007), a journalist, refers to a survey conducted by Prof. Abd EL Nasser Ahmed Gabal, a Professor of Anthropology in Helwan University, that the touristic activity causes an increase in spinsterhood between the girls in the Egyptian Red Sea Governorate. The study affirms that tourism has lead to the increase of the spinsterhood phenomenon especially between girls of the conservative families who are sticking to values and traditions because the men escape from marriage and they resort to marry from foreigners (El Said, 2007, Translike).

In "The Pain of Spinsterhood devours Millions of Youth.. And Ghosts occupy Millions of Apartments", El Meligy and Yassen (2007) highlights that about 13.659.000 million persons, men and women, are overtaken by {spinsterhood} because of the inability to obtain an apartment. Here the problem lurks, as when journalists tackle the issue, they tackle it from a female perspective for they are familiar with using the word spinsterhood even if it the problem is for both. One may perceive this misunderstanding, through labeling the problem as a spinsterhood problem, as a way that enhance the depiction of a bias representation of single women.

The Egyptian Daily Newspaper *El Dostour* (2007) publishes in its issue a news item about a new collection of short stories entitled, ***Bait El Anas*** or "The Spinster's House" by Sahar Tawfek. The newspaper says that this collection participates with another collection entitled, ***Farah El Awanes*** or "The Spinsters' Wedding" by Radia Ahmed in connecting the meaning of the spinsterhood with various and different meanings which exceeds the direct meaning, being past age, to a more wide and deep meaning. These two collections highlight the shift in life in its different levels, either economic or political, and how that shift reflects on the people's life and behaviors. The collection entitled, ***Bait El Anas*** or "The Spinster's House", consists of 16 short stories. The major character in this collection is an eye-watching to the harsh shifts that pass on to the weak body of the society.

Even female writers are sometimes dominated by the males' perspective, and follow their agenda mutely. This appears in the previous collections with titles that label single women as spinsters as it seems that they follow a male dominant perspective mutely. This may help enhancing and maintaining a certain image of single women instead of working on eradicating it from societies.

However, turning to a new trend, in "To Every Girl Killing Herself to Get Married, Please Be Careful of Your Oxygen", Sara El Deshnawy (2007), as a female journalist, calls girls not to be in a rush to marry through her humorous article that mocks appearances and artificiality that people usually care for in any marriage agreements. She affirms that appearance judge and control marriage, and she is asking every woman to be wise in her choice. El Deshnawy (2007) argues that the phrase "marriage is a feeling of safety" becomes a meaningless phrase because women are living in safety at their parents' homes, and they are not instead, as these words say, suffering from a robber who is putting a sword in their necks.

Throughout the previous articles, we see a new female perspective dealing with the singlehood issue which differs from that of male writers who always perceive singlehood in relation to unmarried women with terms such as a problem, a crisis, and a bomb. Although female writers may mutely enhance the effects and pressure of that stereotypical image of single women as spinsters, It is noteworthy to encourage female writers to tackle the issue, considering that it is not a dilemma any more, with focus on the new roles of women, and not just as El Deshnawy (2007) states, in her article, that by staying at her father home to save her oxygen.

In brief, social-psychology, film studies, and media representation have demonstrated the pressure on single women in many cultures, especially Egypt, to abandon their modern roles and rights - such as education and work - to return to the previous traditional ones - staying home to look after children. Through social pressures and movie stereotypes, single

women are forced to comply with the social norms of marriage as an institution in addition to claims of economic burdens that restrict males from marriage.

3.5 Expected Role of media:

Earlier research shows how the TV is important in emphasizing any created phenomena, even if distorted, as realities in the viewers' cognitive perception. (Adoni & Mane, 1984). It also effects and plays an important role, especially with illiterate people who cannot read or write, and usually resort to get information from the TV (Saleh, Personal Communication). Through emphasizing the image of the spinster in the drama or movies displayed in the Egypt, as the researcher assumes, people know what the spinster looks like; these perceptions whether they are good or bad, will dominate their minds as they will consider what they watch to be the reality no matter whether it is true or not, and it will construct as the social reality in the unconscious.

Sahar Al Tawila, Barbara Ibrahim, and Hind Wassef (2001) stress on the mass media as an effective and important factor of change. They emphasize that the Egyptian media are "state sponsored", and how that is useful for establishing a social change that fits with the government policies such as introducing the family planning awareness campaign in the 1980s, health campaigns against diseases, and encourage people to vote. They highlight how powerful television is in awareness, especially through the evening drama serials. Turning to the Egyptian cinema, David A. Cook (1996) also refers to the latest progress which includes a noticeable reduction in government censorship and the appearance of numerous women directors. The majority of them graduated from the Egyptian Film Institute, and they have produced movies on feminist themes such as Asma El Bakri and Inas el-Degheidy.

Cook (1996) refers to the decrease in government censorship in relation to film industry, as well as Al Tawila et al. (2001) point out the "state sponsored", and how that is useful for establishing a social change that fits with the government policies. Moreover, with the growing

presence of female directors, it is more crucial to adopt the new roles of women and challenge the traditional ones which urge women to go back to home and leave the arena for men in order to get married instead of being spinsters.

3.6 Conclusions

This thesis attracts attention to the neglected media dimension of enhancing marriage in Egypt, as well as the distorted image of single, still-unmarried woman in drama (movies). The media, especially film industry, was expected to help in discussing the singlehood problem objectively; however, they actually help in promoting an ugly, sarcastic image of the single, still-unmarried women or what they label as spinsters in the Egyptian society. Women in any society have the right to be treated as human beings and not within a sarcastic frame. Single, unmarried women, while currently labeled as spinsters or *onousa* have the right to discuss and solve her problem.

From the discussion in the literature review, one may find a number of themes. First there is a common argument that suggests that marriage is a basic or 'natural' institutional unit within society, but in both religious and historical discussions it is evident that some level of singleness is also present in every society. Today, some people are arguing perhaps controversially that marriage levels will diminish. It was significant from the previous literature that the reasons behind delayed marriages are many including: economic reasons such as the financial burdens on the groom or exaggeration of marriage requirements, other social reasons such as women's education and their labor force participation. In other societies, especially the Western ones, people there started to adopt under what so called freedom certain concepts such as "unmarried cohabitation and living-apart-together"; however, here in this traditional Arab/ Islamic societies, where the family is the key element of the social structure, such concepts may be difficult to be adopted especially in the Egyptian villages where marriage is considered a deeply rooted cultural norm. However, '*Urfi*' marriages is found to be a least accepted choice

that reduce expenses and at the same time meet the minimum requirements for marriage under the Islamic jurisprudence.

Since the main reasons of delayed marriages are economic; therefore, we cannot blame women alone, as men usually refrain from marriage due to its financial burdens. Thus, if women in Egypt as well as Arab countries, and even in the whole world are victims of the choice of bachelorhood of men, therefore, it is their natural right not to be represented in a wrong, distorted, and stereotypic image because this may lead to backward any society instead of developing it. Although the Western secular countries have overcome these problems of being married or not by allowing the free sexual intercourse, women in Arab/Islamic countries are victims of not practicing this freedom as their resemblances in these Western societies. Instead of enhancing them to hold and save their religions and beliefs, the society and the media as being reflection of the society are putting pressures on them which is absolutely unfair. It may be also considered a try to return women to their traditional role and prioritize it than any other role in life.

Previous studies either socio-psychology or media have proven significant pressure on single women to marry, and how the image of single women is stereotyped in media. From sociological studies, marriage is shown as an important social institution. Many studies indicate how society is formed by values in addition to the religion and laws in addition to the social norms that have been constructed in the society through generations. Although singlehood is considered as a natural and not an unusual case, it reduces the self-esteem of woman, and people label her as a fallow or *bayera*. Role of education in delaying marriage is supported in previous studies in addition to several social and economic factors. Previous studies also support the presence of social pressure against single women, such as "people's gossip" and father and brothers domination. Previous studies reflects the new trend of accepting singlehood by demographers and policymakers to face the growing rates of population. In addition to

predictions that singlehood will persist because several persons consider it as their "conscious choice". Other studies show that early age of marriage for females has been a deeply rooted cultural norm in Egyptian villages and marriage and childbearing are the most important role in women's life.

In sum, a strong social change should be adopted instead of the continuous perception and the stereotyping frame of single women in drama; in addition, singlehood or what they label as 'spinsterhood' should not be depicted as a problem within the Egyptian society because single educated/working women are complete similar to married ones whose work is taking care of her family and raising children.

Chapter 4: Research & Methodology

4.1 Research Approach

In this section, the researcher investigates the effects of the media on singlehood, and whether movies stereotype single women or not. From previous studies and journals, the researcher has noticed lack of previous studies that investigate the Egyptian media dimension in relation to that problem. The focus of this study is mainly examining the Egyptians' perception of single women in relation to Egyptian drama (movies), and how these characters acting the role of spinsters within the Egyptian movies affect them. Therefore, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Highlighting the problem of single women labeled as spinsters, and identifying its size, direction, and reasons.
2. Presenting the problem to the media to help improve the image of the single woman.
3. Engaging the society in solving the problem and offering some solutions.

4.2 Population & Sample

Since this study explores different reasons and sources leading to a particular image of single women, qualitative as well as quantitative methods are used to explore the nature and direction of such image. A chosen sample from the population is used to measure the perception, the role of culture, and the role of media on Egyptians, using surveys, in depth interviews, and field observations. The following section will highlight the demographic makeup of the Egyptian population, followed by an analysis of the composition of the survey sample. This will be followed with descriptions of the qualitative methods used in the study.

4.2.A Population

According to the 2006 census, the population of Egyptians worldwide has reached 76,480,426; approximately 72.6 million people live in Egypt, while an additional three million

Egyptians live abroad.¹⁴ Of the 72.579.030 million persons who live in Egypt, Egyptian males are 37.100.853 million persons, with 51.12% of the population, while the Egyptian females are 35.478.177 million persons, with 48.88%. Urban people represents 30.949.00 million persons, with 42.64%, while rural areas' population represents 41.629.341 million persons, with 57.36%. Greater Cairo Governorate includes 7,787,000 million, with 10,73% of the population, while Menoufia Governorate includes 4,51% of the population. (Al-Ahram Newspaper, April 4, 2007) Also, Christians in the Egyptian society are estimated by 10 million persons, with 13.2%, from 76 million persons of the whole population (<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/9950F7B0-60D0-4A17-9402-C13FE00AAA77.htm>). According to the educational level, as stated in the latest statistics of the Egyptian population in 2006, illiterates are around 16.806.657 million persons, with 29.33%, from the whole population, those who can read and write with no degree are 7.114.499 million persons, with 24.92%, those with higher school reached 1.808.268 million persons, with 3.2%, and those with university degree or more have reached 5.476.704 million persons, with 9.56%.

Regarding the marital status for individuals who are 18 years old and above for males and 16 years old and above for females, those who are single are 13.659.314 million persons. Those who are married are 29.189.966 million persons. Divorced cases are 437.953 thousand persons. 2.942.709 million persons are widowed. The census states that those who are working are 19.877.329 million and those who are not working are 2.040.101 million, and unemployment reaches 9.3%. (Al-Ahram Newspaper).

It is important to understand the Egyptian context through these statistics, however, due to the difficulties to investigate the whole population because of time and resource limits, research has been conducted using a much smaller sample, chosen to represent as accurately as possible, the broader Egyptian population.

(¹⁴) The Egyptian AL Ahram Newspaper, Local News Page, issued on 04/04/2007

4.2.B Survey Sample

As surveys can generate consistent and useful information from a large cluster of people within a very short period of time, the researcher has used this method for the bulk of this study. A total of 370 questionnaires were distributed and 326 respondents completed the questionnaires.

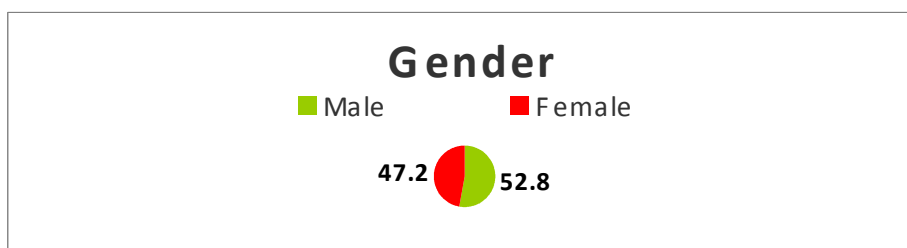
Participants surveyed were selected on the basis of random stratified sampling, a probability sample, because it is characterized by being more representative to the population since "it ensures that a sample is drawn from homogeneous subset of the population" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). The sample is stratified according to gender, geographical distribution (Greater Cairo and Menoufia Governorate), and religion where "the researcher draws a number of units from each subset (stratum) of the population" (Abdulla, class, 2006).

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are displayed in the following pie charts, tables, and charts.

4.2.B.1 Gender

The 326 surveyed sample is conducted on the basis of random stratified sampling as males according to the latest statistics are 51.12% of the population, while the females are 48.44%. The results are shown in the following pie-chart (figure 4.2.B.1).

Figure 4.2.B.1

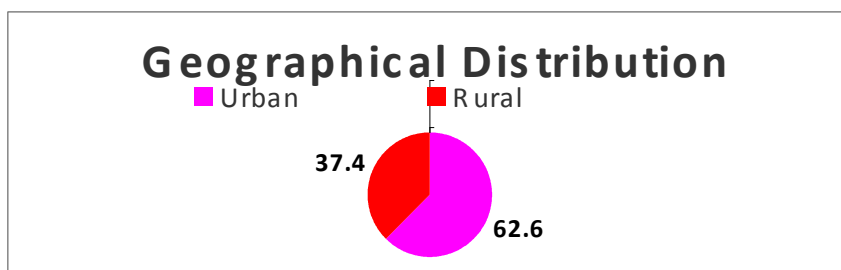


Results display that males (n=172, with 52.8%) and females (n=154, with 47.2%) are stratified depending on the percent of the gender percent of the Egyptian population.

4.2.B.2 Geographical Distribution

Urban areas (Greater Cairo Governorate) and rural areas (*El Tarana* and *Zaweit EL Bakly*, these are two villages in Menoufia Governorate) as according to the 2006 census, Greater Cairo Governorate includes 7.787.000 million, with 10.73% of the population, while Menoufia Governorate includes 4.51% of the population. The results are shown in the following pie-chart (figure 4.2.B.2).

Figure 4.2.B.2

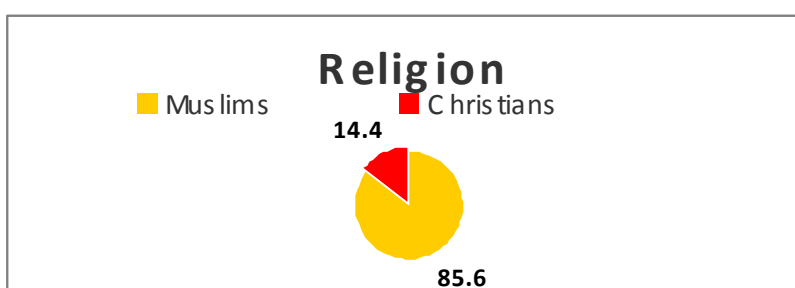


The results show the stratified sample which is characterized by being more representative to the population, as it is distributed in both locations: urban Greater Cairo (n=204, with 62.6%) and rural areas of Menoufia Governorate (n=122, with 37.4%).

4.2.B.3 Religion

Also, taking the religion into consideration, as the stratified sampling is also used, for the Christians in the Egyptian society are estimated by 10 million persons, with 13.2%, from 76 million persons of the whole population (<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/9950F7B0-60D0-4A17-9402-C13FE00AAA77.htm>). As shown in the following pie-chart (figure 4.2.B.3).

Figure 4.2.B.3



From the 326 surveys, 320 persons determined their religion, while 6 were missing, as the number of Muslims (n=274) and Christians (n=46) within the Egyptian society.

4.2.B.4 Age

From the 326 respondents surveyed, 317 answered the age question. Results are shown in the following table (table 4.2.B.4).

Table 4.2.B.4 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) of Age

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Age		
a. Less than 20	45	14.2
b. 20 and Less than 30	89	28.1
c. 30 and Less than 40	77	24.3
d. 40 and Above	106	33.4
Total	317	100.0

4.2.B.5 Martial Status

Table 4.2.B.5 shows the Martial status of the 313 participants of this questions.

Table 4.2.B.5 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) of Martial Status

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Martial Status		
a. Single	142	45.4
b. Married	154	49.2
c. Divorced	5	1.6
d. Widowed	12	3.8
Total	313	100

4.2.B.6 Educational Level

Due to the difficulty which meets the researcher to select the participants based on the stratified sampling according to their education. Therefore, the following table (table 4.2.B.6) shows the frequencies and percentages of the education of the participants.

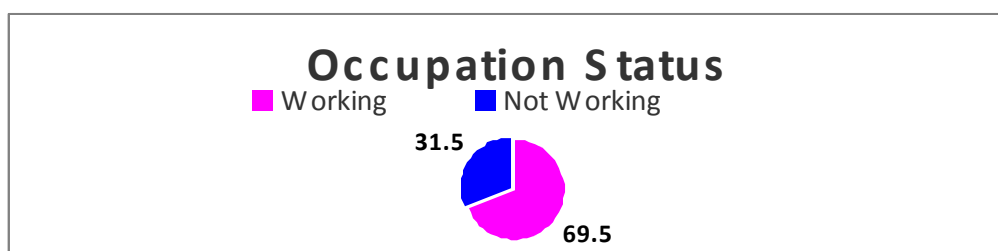
Table 4.2.B.6 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) of Educational Level

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Educational Level		
a. No Education	23	7.1
b. Can Read and Write	22	6.7
c. Basic Education	15	4.6
d. High School/ Equivalent/or Higher school	104	31.9
e. University Degree	125	38.3
f. Graduate Degree	37	11.3
Total	326	100.0

4.2.B.7 Occupational Status

Figure 4.2.B.7 shows the percentage of the occupation status of the 324 participants answered this question from the 326 surveyed persons, as 223 participants are working, with 68.8%; however, 101 participants are not working, with 31.1%

Figure 4.2.B.7



4.2.B.8 Working/Not working

Table 4.2.B.8 shows the type of work of 223 participants of 326 surveyed persons, as 101 are not working and 2 are missing; The following table shows the type of those who are working and why others do not work.

Table 4.2.B.8 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) of Working and Not Working

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Working		
a. Governmental Sector	96	43
b. Private Sector	80	35.9
c. Self Employed	41	18.4
d. Craftsman	6	2.7
Total	223	100.0
Not Working		
a. Retired	11	10.9
b. No Job Opportunity	37	36.6
c. Student	36	35.6
d. Housewife	15	14.9
e. Other	2	2
Total	101	100.0

4.2.B.9 Socioeconomic Status

According to the World Bank¹⁵, the average income of the Egyptians in Egypt is considered as 400 L.E.; that is why, the researcher has decided to investigate the socioeconomic status depending on below average (n=103, with 35.8%), exactly 400 (n=35, with 12.2%), and above average (n=150, with 52.1%). 288 respondents, with 88.3% answered

¹⁵ According th the World Bank, 17 percent of the population (mainly in Upper Egypt and rural areas) living with less than \$1 per day

this question which is a good percent as Egyptians sometimes got scared from investigating their income, while 38, with 11.7% are missing. Table 4.2.B.9 shows the socioeconomic status as follows:

Table 4.2.B.9 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) of Socioeconomic Status

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Socio-economic Status		
a. Less than 400 L.E.	103	35.8
b. Exactly 400 L.E.	35	12.2
c. Above 400 L.E	150	52.1
Total	288	100.0

4.2.C Content & Qualitative Analysis

"Is any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Therefore, content analysis is an essential methodology used in this study since one of the dependent variables under investigation is the role of media. In studying media, the researcher focuses mainly on movies representing the single woman. The content of how this image presented is done by using this method. The population is the available Egyptian films since the beginning of the cinema in Egypt in 1924 until 2005. A non-random purposive sample is used to select movies that fit the purpose of the research as the researcher attempts to measure the differences in representation of single women in relation to type, role, and direction. In addition, the researcher analyzes a docudrama that tackles the issue to have a comprehensive look on the problem.

4.2.D In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews or intensive interviews are one of the methods used in this study in order to gather in-depth or detailed information to have a better picture of the issue under

study. They are characterized by using smaller samples, which offer comprehensive background and elaborate information regarding respondents' views motivations, experiences, and thoughts. The researcher conducts this method particularly as it allows for verbal and non-verbal communication (body language and facial expressions). Because of several advantages of the in-depth interviews, the researcher decides to use this method. The advantages are providing huge details in addition to offering "more accurate responses on sensitive issues" (Wimmer & Dominick, pp.127).

The first population of the in-depth interviews is Egyptian single, unmarried females aged 25 years and above to explore reasons and effects of singlehood that may be helpful as a pilot study in conducting the questionnaire.

The second population is Egyptian scholars who are experts in their fields that are related to the issue, such as media specialists, filmmakers, theater directors, critics, religious men, and sociologists or psychiatrists. The researcher interviews media specialists taking into consideration the country's position towards that issue through its official media speaker, and two anchors, a male and female, three cinema directors, two males and a female, one male theater director in addition to one cinema critic. The researcher takes into consideration religious men opinion in the Egyptian society, as she interviews a Muslim Sheikh, an Orthodox priest and a Catholic bishop. Furthermore, a psychiatrist is interviewed, seeking objectivity by tackling the issue from all its angles.

4.2.E Field Observations

Field observation is the most natural setting of qualitative research method, and may offer a huge amount of details and information that may not be acquired through quantitative method. It is used for description and explanation which differs from the first two quantitative methods which are based on measurement and quantification.

The population of the field observations consists of rural inhabitants. The researcher has observed a volunteering group of nine villagers in a *mandara*, a huge room, in one of the village's houses in one of the Egyptian villages called *El Tarana* in Menoufia Governorate in Egypt as a natural setting.

4.3 Variables, Operational Definitions and Level of Measurements

4.3.A Variables

Variables connect the observed world with the theoretical and include both independent and dependent (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). The independent variable can be manipulated by the researcher and is seen to be the cause; on the other hand, the dependent variable is of interest to the researcher and is seen to be the result.

- **Independent variables in this study are:**
 - Actresses
 - Movies
 - Gender
 - Geographical distribution
 - Religion
 - Age
 - Marital status
 - Educational level
 - Work
 - Economic status
- **Dependent variables in this study are:**
 - Perception of single, unmarried woman
 - Role of culture
 - Role of Media

4.3.B Operational Definition and Level of Measurements

The operational definitions explaining how the variables are to be measured exactly are as follows:

- **Independent variables:** are the variables that the researcher has the power to change or manipulate.
 - **Movies-** films that are presented in the Egyptian cinema, and are measured on a nominal level of measurement.
 - **Actresses-** females acting in Egyptian drama (movies) on a nominal level of measurement.

- **Gender-** is divided into two categories at a nominal level of measurement.
- **Geographical distribution-** is divided into two categories at a nominal level of measurement.
- **Religion-** is divided into two categories at a nominal level of measurement.
- **Age-** is divided into four categories based on an ordinal level of measurement.
- **Marital status-** is divided into four categories measured at a nominal level of measurement.
- **Educational level-** is divided into six categories and measured at the ordinal level of measurement.
- **Work-** is divided into two categories (working/not working) based on a nominal level of measurement.
- **Economic Status-** is divided into 3 categories measured at the interval level of measurement.
- **Dependent variables:** are the variables that the researcher is trying to measure.
 - **Perception of single, unmarried woman-** is how people view the single, unmarried females in relation to their age, physical appearance, marriage opportunities, behavior and manners, and factors leading to singlehood, such as personal, psychological, economic, biological (health), social, and religious.
 - **Role of Culture-** The whole social behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, notions, values, norms, traditions, religions, institutions, and all further products of human activities and thought, these patterns, traits, and products are considered to be as the expression of a particular time or era, class, group, community, or population (the American Heritage Dictionary, 1992).
 - **Role of Media-** cumulative images and agenda setting of media in forming individuals' perception of single women.

4.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

4.4.A Main Research Questions

Due to the complexity of this subject, it was important to explore its dimensions from different perspectives. That's why, the researcher uses a number of research methods include: survey, content analysis, in-depth interviews, and field observations in conducting this thesis to benefit from the advantages of each method, to guarantee both credibility and validity, to investigate this social issue reasonably and realistically, to cover the problem from all its sides, and to answer the following three main research questions:

Main RQ-1) What are the different dimensions of the spinsterhood problem?

Main RQ-2) What are the reasons for this problem?

Main RQ-3) What are the solutions for this problem?

4.4.B Subsidiary Research Questions and Hypotheses

4.4.B.1 Subsidiary Research Questions

Subsidiary RQ1: Is there a relationship between determining the age of a spinster and the demographical variables (gender, geographical distribution, religion, age, marital status, education level, work, and economic status) of the viewers.

Subsidiary RQ2: Is there a relationship between how a spinster is depicted in the Egyptian media (movies) and gender of the viewers?

Subsidiary RQ3: Is there a difference between how a spinster is depicted in the Egyptian media (movies) and geographical distribution of the viewers?

Subsidiary RQ4: Does the Egyptian dramas (movies) play a role in constructing and maintaining the stereotypical image of the single, still-unmarried woman within the Egyptian society?

4.4.B.2 Subsidiary Hypotheses

Subsidiary H1: There is a positive relationship between the image of a spinster in Egyptian movies and the image of the spinster in the Egyptian society.

Subsidiary H2: Egyptian movies portray the single, still-unmarried woman as a spinster stereotypically.

4.5 Methods

4.5.A Survey distribution and structure

Questionnaires were distributed in different places like cafés, shopping centers, educational institutes, peoples homes, working areas, as well as on the streets. People were stopped on the street and asked to answer the questionnaire. In some cases they were rewarded with simple gifts and/or sweets. This was done in an exploration of whether there is a relationship between peoples' perception of spinsters and the media's depiction of a spinster in relation to the demographic variables and the society's view with an aim to identify the existence or absence of a problem. Assistants¹⁶ who distributed the questionnaires were trained to read the questions if needed with objectivity without any intimidation or leading attitudes towards a particular answer. In cases of illiteracy, the researcher or assistants read out the questions as they were written and recorded the answers.

The questionnaire contained a total of 34 close-ended questions that were designed based on varying scales; the Likert-type scales, or the summated rating approach, 5-points as follows; strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree, the bi-polar semantic differential scale, where a 5 points bi-polar adjectives are measured, where 1 and 2 are on the negative side, 4 and 5 are on the positive side, while 3 is neutral, such scales in the study are negative/positive, ugly/beautiful, unobjective/objective, uncredible/credible, Unlovable /Lovable, sarcastic/serious, and unrealistic/realistic, as it depend mainly on odd numbers. The questionnaire is conducted in Arabic in order to satisfy the needs of a larger group of audience, and it is also translated into English to ease the statistical procedures for the researcher. See Appendix 1 & 2 for the English and Arabic versions respectively.

¹⁶ The researcher's assistants are: Maram Said, one of her colleagues, in urban areas, and the other is Mai Refaat, one of the participants in the field observation, who volunteered to help in distributing the surveys in rural areas.

A pilot study was conducted to identify problems with the questions to make necessary changes or adjustments before distribution. The researcher conducted a pilot study of 15 surveys after which she changed the format of some questions, such as question number 18, as she discovered from the pilot study that respondents found it difficult to understand. The researcher also did some rewording such as "Biological Factors" instead of "Physiological Factors", upon the advice of Nashae Said, a psychiatrist, who was surveyed. Also, upon his advice "psychological factors" is added to the factors in question 18 with certain categories beneath.

The researcher also changed the format of the semantic differential scale in question no. 26 from 7 points to 5 points to prevent any misunderstandings by the respondents. Also, the researcher added "Housewife" as a category to the non-working status. She also added the socioeconomic status to the questionnaire. The researcher divided one question into two questions no. 32 and no. 33 as she preferred to categorize the interpersonal communication into categories instead of compiling it with the mass media.

4.5.B Content & Qualitative Analyses

In addition to the qualitative analysis of a docudrama related to the topic under study, the researcher's main aim is to examine the Egyptian films since the beginning of the cinema in Egypt. However, there are difficulties in compiling an exhaustive list of the movies that tackle the issue of single women as spinsters in the Egyptian cinema's history for many reasons: there are movies that are no longer available because their negatives were destroyed, and there is no national archive, as explained by Maged Habashy¹⁷, and later reaffirmed by Fawzy Soliman¹⁸: "we have no real archive for movies, it is terrible". That is why, the researcher decided to use a

¹⁷ Personal Interview, Maged Habashy, Egyptian Movie Director and Editor, Goethe Center, Cairo February 14, 2007

¹⁸ Personal Interview, Fawzy Soliman, Senior Movie Critic, Meeting at Goethe Center, Cairo February 14, 2007

purposive sample from the available Egyptian drama – gathering from the movies that are available.

In conducting the content analysis of the Egyptian movies, the operational definitions of the variables explored are the type (comedy and tragedy) definition of spinster, Image/direction of spinster (either positive, negative, or both), and the role of spinster (either major, minor character, or both). From these available movies, the researcher has taken a sample of movies related to the topic of the research since the cinema has started in 1924 up until 2005. An even number of 54 movies (27 comedy & 27 drama tragedy) are selected from a purposive sample of 63 movies tackling the spinsterhood problem to measure the differences through analyzing the image of single woman labeled as spinster whether positive or negative, and whether the spinster is represented by a major or minor character, and how are they represented either in good, happy shape or as being desperate for not fulfilling their goal of marriage, and how marriage appears as crucial or main theme for women (Appendix 3).

Although other movies acted by male actors exaggerate that image of the spinster in the Egyptian cinema, such as Ismail Yassin in *El Anesa Hanafy* 'Miss Hanafy' by Fatin Abd El Wahab in 1954 in which he acted the role of a spinster after the character 'Hanafy' changed from a male to a female after an operation, and Ibrahim Nasr who dressed as a woman in *Zakia Zakaria Fel Parlamen* "Zakia Zakaria in the Parliament" by Raa'e'd Labib in 2001, the researcher may not include them in the content analysis because the role is acted by males not females.

Before classifying the movies, it is very important to highlight the start of the Cinema in Egypt. In "The History of Cinema in Egypt: The First Part from 1896 to 1930", Ahmed El Hadary (1989) states that the first long narrative movie publicly presented to the audience in winter 1924 in the Egyptian history was titled, "In the Country of Tutankhamen", which was produced and directed by Victor Rosito, an Italian lawyer who was living in Egypt during that

period. That is why, the researcher is going to classify the Egyptian movies starting from that period until present.

According to the Arab Encyclopedia of Movies, Salah Abou Seif el al. (1994) wrote the complete details for 4500 movies produced in the Arab World from 1924 until the end of 1993, unmarried woman was represented as *anas* as classified during that period¹⁹. Through a content analysis, the researcher also investigates the recent movies of the Cinema Guidance books from years 1994-2005 published by the Cinema Cultural Center.

Independent variable: Movies

Dependent Variable 1: Image/Direction

Dependent Variable 2: Significant Role

1. **The independent variable will be measured by:** the Egyptian movies tragic, comic, or both since 1924 until 2005.
2. **The first dependent variable will be measured:** according to the frequency of single women's image/direction represented either positive, negative or both.
3. **The second dependent variable will be measured:** according to the frequency of the role of the actresses acting the role of 'spinsters' either major, minor role, or both.

Data Collection

The unit of analysis for the study is the image/direction of the single women. A content analysis is conducted on the image/direction of single women labeled as 'spinsters' in the movies since the start of the cinema until 2005 in which a selection of non random sampling of movies are chosen based on the purposive sampling from the available movies in the cinema.

¹⁹ Thanks to Mr. Maged Habashy, an Egyptian director, for his cooperation that helped me a lot to come up with this list of the representation of single women as spinsters within the Egyptian Cinema.

The operational definitions:

Type of Movies:

- **Tragedy:** any entertaining movie that is related to misfortune, hardships, heartbreaking, grief, sorrow, misery, disputes, revenge, and depression.
- **Comedy:** any entertaining movie that is related to humor, express amusement, funny, joking, and comedian issues.
- **Both:** any entertaining movie that contain both tragic and sad scenes combined with laugh and humor

Image/Direction

- **Spinster** or *anas*- is the female who has not been known that she is engaged or announced about her among the society for being single, unmarried before even if she has been secretly committed a lawful or unlawful unannounced marriage as well as committing adultery; the representation of *anas* will be observed through the point of view of the actress playing the role and/or those around her who are suspicious of her and viewing or referring to her as such.
- **Image/Direction of spinster-** is the direction representing the actress who is acting as spinster through which the single woman were presented in the Egyptian drama or movies can be positive or negative in relation to her appearance, femininity, and behavior.
- **The positive Image/direction** is the female who is represented as physically attractive or acceptable, showing femininity (decency and politeness), and who acts in a normal way; therefore, blaming reasons of her *onousa* on the surroundings rather than on herself as a person.
- **The negative Image/direction** is the female who is represented as physically ugly, unattractive, unacceptable, showing non femininity (indecent and impoliteness), and who acts in an abnormal idiotic way; therefore, blaming reasons of her *onousa* on herself as she wants to marry anyone without thinking or using her mind.
- **The positive and negative Image/direction** will be a combination of both.
- **Significant Role-** is the role of the actress either acting a major or minor role of being a spinster within the Egyptian movies.
- **Major Role-** is the role of the actress(es) representing a spinster or spinsters acted by the heroine(s) and/or the main character(s) in the Egyptian movie.
- **Minor Role-** is the role of the actress(es) representing a spinster or spinsters acted by secondary character(s) or unknown character(s) in the Egyptian movie.
- **Both-** is the role of actresses representing spinsters acted by both major and minor characters.

4.5.C In-depth Interviews

The researcher conducts nine in-depth interviews with unmarried females in relation to singlehood and how singlehood affects them or not in addition to different reasons lead to it in the Egyptian society. Also, for more clarification of the problem, in-depth interviews are conducted with Egyptian scholars who are experts in their fields related to the issue, such as media specialists, filmmakers, theater directors, critics, religious men, and psychiatrists.

4.5.D Field Observations

The first field observation was conducted in one of the Egyptian villages called *El Tarana* in Menoufia Governorate. Due to the emergency law, the researcher shifted her plan from a coffee shop to a *mandara*, a huge room in rural houses. The researcher provided the group within the field observation with all attractive means to join and participate in the open discussion about the spinsterhood problem. On the one hand, the family who owns the *mandara* provides tangerine and tea boiled on fire made out of corn husks through the discussion which shows the hospitality of the rural people, and on the other hand, the researcher provides them, for free, with biscuits, pumpkin seed, chips, chocolates, and other oriental sweets, such as Zenab's Fingers "Sawabea Zeinab" and "Meshabek".

Chapter 5: Findings

Findings in this thesis are based on results of the 326 surveys, a content analysis of 54 Egyptian movies, a qualitative analysis of a docudrama tackling the problem, in-depth interviews with 12 experts in the fields of mass communication, religion, psychology and film, and field observations from a rural village in Menoufia governorate.

Findings of the statistical analysis were acquired through using the computer program (SPSS). Tables, charts, and pie charts are used to show results of the findings obtained through either the questionnaire or the content analysis.

5.1 Findings of the Survey

This section is comprised of a descriptive analysis of the answers through using both types of statistics: descriptive statistics (data distribution and summary statistics) and inferential statistics (cross tabulation and chi-square). Tables and charts show frequencies, percentages, and ranks for multiple-choice answers.

5.1.A Participants' opinions about spinsterhood or *onousa*

To examine the role of culture, religion, and media (especially movies) in stereotyping single, still-unmarried women, it is crucial to start by investigating the opinion of people regarding the single, still-unmarried woman, their definition of the word spinster or *anas*, and how do they determine her age.

5.1.A.1 Definition of Spinster or *Anas*

According to question 11, which asks about the participants' point of view towards the meaning of the word spinster or *anas*. Table 5.1.A.1 displays the responses of the participants towards defining the word spinster or *anas*.

Table 5.1.A.1 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) on Participants' opinion about what the word Spinster or *Anas* means*

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
The word Spinster or <i>Anas</i> means			
a. A Woman past age and not married	106	32.5	1
b. A Woman that train of Marriage left her**	95	29.1	2
c. Any girl not married after puberty	12	3.7	7
d. A Woman with no marriage opportunities	71	21.8	3
e. An Ugly Woman either in Appearance or behavior	17	5.2	5
f. A woman with Bad Reputation	15	4.6	6
g. All the Above	23	7.1	4
h. Others	12	3.7	7

* multiple choice answers are permitted. ** An Egyptian proverb describes and mocks single woman.

From the 326 participants, it is interesting to find that most of participants define the word spinster as 'a woman past age and not married', with 32.5%, and 'a woman that train of Marriage left her', with 29.1%. However, 21.8% of them see it fits more 'a woman with no marriage opportunities'.

5.1.A.2 Opinion about better term for use instead of the word spinster or *anas*

From the 326 participants to question 12, only 285 persons respond to this question.

The following pie-chart shows the results (figure 5.1.A.2)

Figure 5.1.A.2

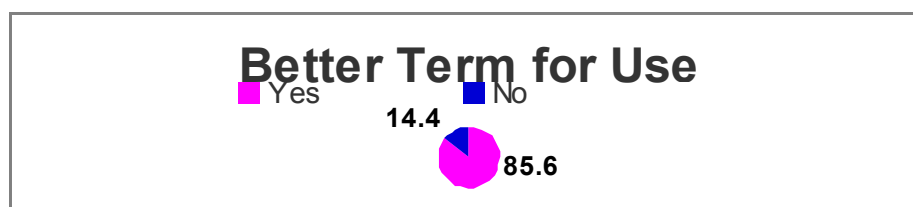
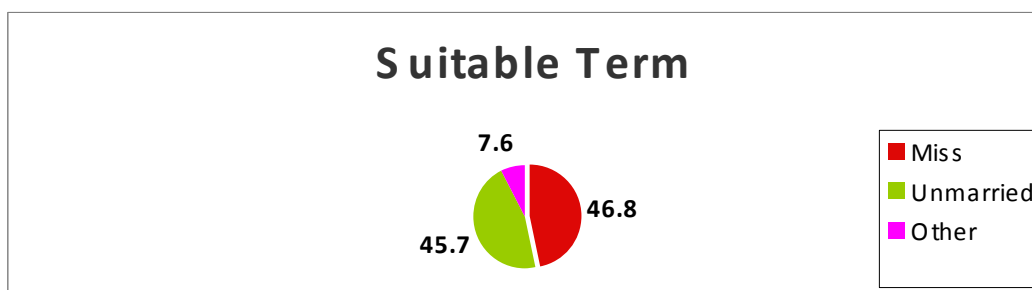


Figure 5.1.A.2 shows that 85.6% agree that there is another term to use better than the word spinster, while 41 persons were reluctant to the change and prefer to keep on using the same term, with 14.4%.

5.1.A.3 Suitable term for use better than the word spinster or *anas*

From the 326 participants, 278 persons responded to question 13 while 48 participants did not. The results appear in the following pie-chart (figure 5.1.A.3).

Figure 5.1.A.3



From the 278 respondents, 130 persons agree that 'Miss' may be used as another suitable term better than the word spinster, with 46.8%. 127 persons or 45.7% believe the word 'unmarried' is better to be used than the word spinster or *anas*. However, 21 participants also consider other words most suitable, such as 'The Noble woman' or *Al Mara'a El Aziza* instead of *anas*.

5.1.A.4 Age when woman takes the title spinster or *anas*

Responses to question 14 about the age when a woman is titled as spinster or *anas* are represented in the following table (table 5.1.A.4).

Table 5.1.A.4 Frequencies (n) and Percentages (%) on Participants' opinion about the age of single woman to be titled as spinster or *anas*.

Participants' opinion about the age of woman to be titled as Spinster or <i>Anas</i>	<u>n</u>	%
Age when woman takes the title Spinster or <i>Anas</i>		
a. 20 and Less than 25	9	2.8
b. 25 and Less than 30	17	5.4
c. 30 and Less than 35	62	19.6
d. 35 and Less than 40	68	21.5
e. 40 and Less than 45	77	24.4
f. 45 and Less than 50	35	11.1
g. 50 and Above	12	3.8
h. None	30	9.5
i. Other	6	1.9
Total	316	100.0

207 persons, or 65.5%, identify a single woman as a spinster from the age of 30 until the age of 45. While 30 participants state there is 'no age', another 9 people, suggest the first category from '20 and less than 25'.

5.1.B Participants' Perception about how the term spinster or *anas* affects the woman

The researcher examines people's perception according to how single women are affected through descriptive statistics: data distribution by using tables and summary statistics such as the mean and standard deviation.

5.1.B.1 Data Distribution: Frequencies & Percentages on participants' opinions about how woman is affected by being labeled as spinster or *anas*

The researcher investigates how the term spinster affects single women through the following three statements in question 15, 16, and 17: "The term Spinster or *Anas* affects the woman psychologically", "The term Spinster or *Anas* affects the woman Socially", and "The term Spinster or *Anas* reduces the self esteem of the woman socially". Table 5.1.B.1 displays the results.

Table 5.1.B.1 Frequencies & Percentages on participants' opinions to how woman is affected by being labeled as spinster or *anas*.

Woman is affected	<u>n</u>	%
psychologically		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	14	4.3
Neutral	21	6.5
Agree / Strongly Agree	288	89.2
Total	323	100.0
Socially		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	37	11.5
Neutral	27	8.4
Agree / Strongly Agree	259	80.1
Total	323	100.0
Reduces the Self Esteem of the woman socially		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	105	32.5
Neutral	36	11.2
Agree / Strongly Agree	182	56.3
Total	323	100.0

To respond to these three statements, Likert scale, which is based on five degrees strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree, is used. 323 respondents respond out of 326 persons with 3 missing. The three statements show how woman is affected by this term. Although respondents who agree with the first statement, "The term spinster or *anas* affects the woman psychologically" are 288 persons, with 89.2%, and 259 respondents, with 80.1%, agrees with the second statement, "The term spinster or *anas* affects the woman socially", only 182 participants, with 56.3%, of the sample agree with the third statement, "The term spinster or *anas* reduces the self esteem of the woman socially". The previous table shows the answer (table 5.1.B.1).

5.1.B.2 Summary Statistics for participants' opinions to how woman is affected by being labeled as spinster or *anas*.

The following table 5.1.B.2 displays the descriptive statistics of frequency, mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation of how the participants respond to the previous three statements

Table 5.1.B.2 Summary Statistics for participants' opinions to how woman is affected by being labeled as spinster or *Anas*.

Woman is affected	<u>N</u>	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
Psychologically	323	4.50	.889	19.7%
Socially	323	4.19	1.093	26.1%
Reduces the Self Esteem of the woman socially	323	3.51	1.406	40%

From the previous table, it is shown that the first statement, 'woman is affected psychologically', is the most agreeable statement by respondents as the coefficient of variation comes 19.7%, followed by the second statement and then the third one.

5.1.C Participants' Perception of the factors leading to Spinsterhood or *Onousa*

Question 18 measures the factors that lead to spinsterhood or *onousa*, as they are divided into personal, psychological, economic, biological, social, and religious factors. It is noteworthy that the in-depth interviews are useful to come out with these factors and their reasons. Table 5.1.C (Appendix 5.1) displays the frequencies and percentages of the reasons behind each factor.

Answers to the personal factors that lead to spinsterhood show that 'women's work' is a non-problematic reason according to participants. Although 79 participants, the highest percent, with 24.2%, perceive the reason as lack of appropriate matching between males and females, 15 persons, the lowest percent, with 4.6%, think that woman's work is the reason behind that.

Psychological factors that lead to spinsterhood are determined in the previous table, as 28.5% of participants think 'all the above' are factors that lead to spinsterhood, followed in rank by 20.6% of respondents who think the reason is that there is 'no psychological emotional comfort between both', then 19.3% think the reason of spinsterhood is 'a woman failed in a love relation refusing to experience another'.

According to the economic factors, 164 participants, with 50.3%, consider 'all the above' as reasons that lead to that problem, followed by 19.6% of respondents who connect the problem of spinsterhood with unemployment, 17.2% of respondents consider the reason is that youth do not have money to marry. 'Exaggeration in Dowry' appears to be the lowest reason mentioned.

Answers to the biological factors are shown in Appendix 5.1, and they are: 41.7% see no biological reasons for that, followed by 18.4% agree that 'all the above' are reasons for not marrying one of single women who are titled as spinsters, then, 10.4% of participants consider the reason for refraining to marry single women is due to their inability to get pregnant.

Participants to the social factors that lead to spinsterhood are: 27% agree with 'all the above' reasons, followed secondly by, 16.9% of respondents who consider the cause is 'the social low esteem view of the spinster or *anas*'.

In relation to the religious factors, 25.5% of participants return the reason to the religion 'prohibition of any relation except marriage', while equal percent of 25.5% see there is 'no religious reasons', the third choice in the rank is the 'essentiality of marriage', with 18.7%. What is interesting is that 5 persons, with 1.5%, think the spinster or *anas* is religiously hated.

5.1.D Participants' Perception of the role of the Religious places (Mosque/Church) and NGOs to solve the issue the Spinsterhood (*Onousa*)

5.1.D.1 Frequencies and Percentages of Participants' Perception of the role of both Religious Places and NGOs

Role of religious places in addition to the NGOs is investigated through question no. 19, "Do you think that the religious places (Mosque/Church) play an awareness role in solving the spinsterhood (*onousa*) problem?" and question no. 20, "Do you think that the NGOs play an awareness role in solving the spinsterhood (*onousa*) problem?". The following table (table 5.1.D.1) displays the results.

Table 5.1.D.1 Frequencies and Percentages on how the participants perceive the role played to solve the issue of Spinsterhood (*Onousa*)

Participants' Perception of an awareness role played in solving the Spinsterhood (<i>Onousa</i>) problem	<u>n</u>	%
Religious places (Mosque/Church)		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	70	22.3
Neutral	40	12.8
Agree / Strongly Agree	203	64.9
Total	313	100.0
NGOs		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	115	36.9
Neutral	63	20.2
Agree / Strongly Agree	134	42.9
Total	312	100.0

Although 203 participants, with 64.9%, agree with question no. 19 "Do you think that the religious places (Mosque/Church) play an awareness role in solving the spinsterhood (*onousa*) problem?", only 134 participants, with 42.9%, agree with question no. 20 "Do you think that the NGOs play an awareness role in solving the spinsterhood (*onousa*) problem?" (table 5.1.D.1).

5.1.D.2 Summary Statistics of Perception of the role of both Religious Places and NGOs

Summary statistics are obtained in the following table 5.1.D.2 through the mean, standard deviation, and the coefficient of variation.

Table 5.1.D.2 Mean and Standard Deviation for participants' perception on the role played to solve the issue of Spinsterhood (*Onousa*)

	<u>n</u>	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
Religious places (Mosque/Church)	313	3.70	1.278	34.5%
NGOs	312	3.17	1.239	39.1%

From the total of 326 respondents, 313 respond to question no. 19 with a mean value of 3.70 and SD= 1.278, while 312 participants respond to question no. 20 with a mean value of 3.17

and SD= 1.239. Question no. 19, with CV= 34.5%, is somehow more agreeable than question 20, with CV=39.1%.

5.1.E Perception of Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas*

Statistics here is obtained through both kinds of descriptive statistics: data distribution and summary statistics.

5.1.E.1 Data Distribution: Frequencies and Percentages on Participants' Perception of Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas*

The following table 5.1.E.1 displays the results of the three statements, 'woman titled as spinster or *anas* is a criminal' in question no. 21, 'woman titled as spinster or *anas* is a victim to this image' in question no. 22, and 'suggestion to change the term spinster or *anas*' in question no. 23. It is noteworthy to admit that the first two statements are used through an image of spinster as criminal and its opposite to be a victim in order to ensure credibility.

Table 5.1.E.1 Frequency and Percentages on Perception of woman titled as Spinster or *Anas*

Participants' Perception of Woman titled as Spinster or <i>Anas</i>	<u>n</u>	%
Woman titled as Spinster or <i>Anas</i> is a criminal		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	253	80.6
Neutral	29	9.2
Agree / Strongly Agree	32	10.2
Total	314	100.0
Woman titled as spinster or <i>Anas</i> is a victim to this image		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	46	14.6
Neutral	30	9.5
Agree / Strongly Agree	239	75.9
Total	315	100.0
Suggest to change the term spinster or <i>Anas</i>		
Strongly disagree / Disagree	19	6.0
Neutral	11	3.5
Agree / Strongly Agree	287	90.6
Total	317	100.0

Results demonstrate how a single woman is represented as a victim to that image and most of participants express the importance for change. 80.6% of respondents disagree with the first statement, 'Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas* is a criminal', while 75.9% of respondents agree to the second statement, 'Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas* is a victim'. In addition, 90.6% of participants agree with the third statement, 'Suggesting to change the term spinster or *Anas*'.

5.1.E.2 Summary Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation on Participants' Perception of Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas*

Summary statistics is obtained for the three statements, 'woman titled as spinster or *anas* is a criminal', 'woman titled as spinster or *anas* is a victim to this image', and 'suggestion to change the term spinster or *anas*', and results are as shown in the following table 5.1.E.2

Table 5.1.E.2 Summary Statistics for participants' perception of Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas*

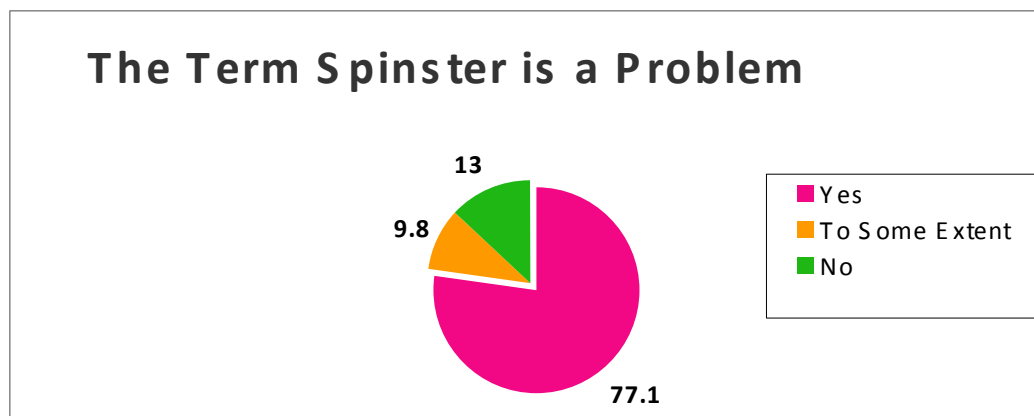
	<u>n</u>	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
Woman titled as spinster or <i>anas</i> is a criminal	314	1.98	1.031	52%
Woman titled as spinster or <i>anas</i> is a victim to this image	315	3.94	1.130	28.8%
Suggestion to change the term spinster or <i>anas</i>	317	4.38	.925	21.1%

The CV of the third statement is the more agreeable one with 21.1% followed by the second one, as the CV equals 28.8%. However, no agreement on the first statement is attained.

5.1.F Participants' Perception on whether the term spinster is a problem or not

Investigating whether the term is problematic, participants are asked whether they consider the term spinster or *anas* as a problem or not. Results are as shown in the following pie-chart (figure 5.1.F).

Figure 5.1.F



From the 326 participants, 315 persons respond to this question while 11 participants did not. 243 persons consider the term spinster as a problem, with 77.1%. 31 persons reply to some extent, with 9.8%. However, 41 participants, with 13%, did not consider the term spinster or *anas* as a problem.

5.1.G Solutions suggested to change the concept or the term Spinster or *Anas*

To solve and change the concept, some solutions are presented through some questions such as question no. 25, as shown in the following table (table 5.1.G).

Table 5.1.G Frequencies and Percentages on participants' opinions to change the term spinster or *Anas**

Participants' Perception of Solutions	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
Solutions to change the term spinster or <i>Anas</i>			
a. Religious places should play a more effective role	48	14.7	2
b. NGOs should play a more effective role	20	6.1	6
c. Media should play a role in Awareness	39	12.0	3
d. Advise men to marry from those who fit their age	25	7.7	5
e. The state should grant who marry incentives	20	6.1	6
f. A girl who is past age should not be accused as a criminal	31	9.5	4
g. All the Above	147	45.1	1
h. Others	15	4.6	7

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

Results display that 147 respondents, with 45.1%, agree with all the mentioned solutions, as it obtains the first rank as shown in table 5.1.G, religious places' role comes next, with 14.7%, and then is followed by the media's role in awareness, with 12%.

5.1.H Participants' Perception of Spinster presented in the media especially movies

Question no. 26 measures the participants' perception of single women represented as spinsters in the media especially movies. Participants' perception of spinster presented in movies is measured according to the semantic differential bi-polar scale measurement where 1 and 2 are on the negative side, 4 and 5 are on the positive side, while 3 is neutral. Results are displayed in table 5.1.H (Appendix 5.2).

Results in table 5.1.H show that there is a general negative connotation through frequencies and percent shown, as 176 persons, with 72.1%, perceive the image of spinster in movies as a negative image. Then, unlovable comes next, as 152 persons, with 63%, state it is an unlovable image, and 149 persons, with 62.9% consider the image presented is subjective. Fourth in rank is the 151 participants, with 61.9%, who choose that the image presented is being a sarcastic image. Then, 61.3% of participants see the image as ugly. Also, 58.7% of participants see the image of single women depicted as spinsters as unreliable, while the least in rank is 56.1% of the participants who see the image as an unrealistic image. What is interesting is that although 72.1% of participants agree that the image is negative, only 56.1% of them see it as unrealistic.

5.1.I Participants' Perception of the Media's Role

In question no. 27, Likert Scale is used to examine the Media's role and particularly movies whether confirming and ensuring the image of single woman as spinster or *anas* in the society or not. Results are displayed in table 5.1.I.1 as the following.

Table 5.1.I.1 Frequencies and Percentages on how the participants perceive the role played by the media especially drama (movies) to ensure the image of spinster in the society

Participants' Perception of the role played by media especially movies to confirm the image of spinster in society	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly disagree / Disagree	59	19.3
Neutral	53	17.3
Agree / Strongly Agree	194	63.4
Total	306	100.0

Results shown in table 5.1.I.1 shows that 194 persons, with 63.4%, agree that the media especially movies ensure the image of single woman as spinster in the society. Moreover, the following table 5.1.I.2 shows the descriptive statistics for participants' perception of the role played by the media and particularly movies to confirm the image of single woman as spinster in the Egyptian society.

5.1.I.2 Descriptive Statistics for Participants' Perception of the role played by the media especially drama (movies) to ensure the image of spinster in the society.

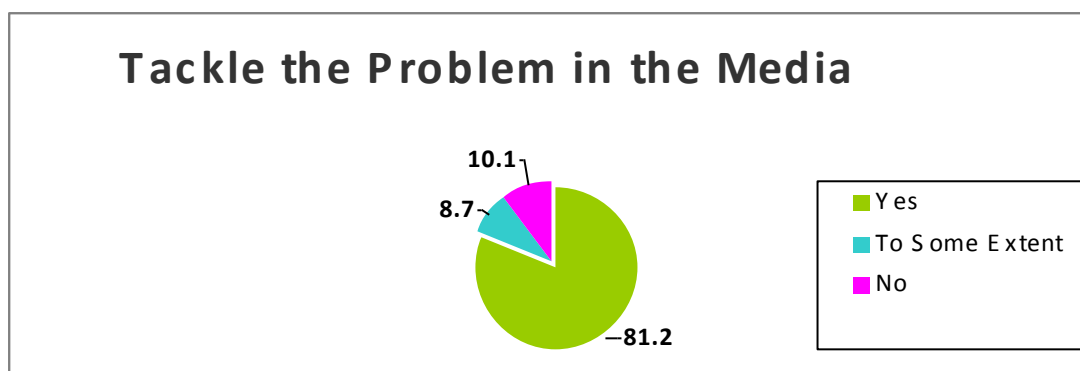
	<u>n</u>	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
Movies confirm the image of spinster in society	306	3.68	1.151	31.2%

The mean value as shown (table 5.1.I.2) is 3.68 with SD= 1.151, and the CV= 31.2% which shows agreeable on that.

5.1.J Participants' Perceptions concerning the media's role in tackling this problem

From the 326 participants, 309 persons respond to question no. 28, while 17 participants did not. Results are displayed in the following pie chart (figure 5.1.J).

Figure 5.1.J



As shown in figure 5.1.J, the researcher finds majority agreement to tackle this problem in the media as 251 persons agree, with 81.2%, and 27 persons said to some extent, with 8.7%, while 31 participants do not agree to tackle this issue in the media, with 10.1%.

5.1.K Participants' Preference to tackle this problem

The researcher examines the preference of participants to tackle the problem as well as ranking their choices through question no. 29. The following table (table 5.1.K) displays the results.

Table 5.1.K Frequencies & Percentages on Participants' Preference to tackle this problem*

Participants' Preference to tackle this problem	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
a. Health Programs	44	13.5	6
b. Religious Programs	130	39.9	1
c. Movies	64	19.6	3
d. Series	59	18.1	4
e. Plays	28	8.6 □	8
f. Ads and Guiding Commercials	48	14.7	5
g. Investigative Reports	36	11.0	7
h. Symposiums and Gatherings	64	19.6	3
i. All the Above	119	36.5	2

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

Results in table 5.1.K show that religious programs comes on the top priority in the ranking of participants choices, followed by all the above, and movies comes as the third choice parallel with symposiums and gatherings.

5.1.L Participants' Preference of which elements within the Message of the Media should be focused on to improve the image of the single woman labeled as spinster or *anas*

In question no. 30, it is noteworthy to investigate the preference of elements within the message that media should focus on to improve the image of the single woman depicted as spinster. Table 5.1.L shows the results.

Table 5.1.L Frequencies & Percentages on Participants' Preference of which elements within the message to focus on to improve the image of the single woman labeled as spinster*

Elements within the message to focus on	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
1. Explaining and Interpreting the Problem	35	10.7	3
2. Investigating the Problem	24	7.4	5
3. Giving Advice to the Problem	23	7.1	6
4. Setting Solutions to the Problem	34	10.4	4
5. Working on Solving the Problem	41	12.6	2
6. All the Above	154	47.2	1

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

Results exemplify that 'All the above' comes as the first priority, followed by 'working on solving the problem' as the second choice.

5.1.M Participants' Opinion about the role that the media in general and the drama (movies) in particular should play to improve the image of Spinster or *Anas* Woman

Question no. 31 is referring to the role that the media and movies especially should play to improve the image. Solutions to improve the image of single women are shown in the following table (table 5.1.M)

Table 5.1.M Frequencies & Percentages on Participants' Opinion about the role that the media in general and the drama (movies) in particular should play to improve the image of Spinster*

Opinion to improve the image of Spinster	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
a. Conducting Broad Media Awareness Campaigns	27	8.3	4
b. Tackling the problem seriously	42	12.9	2
c. Never representing her in a sarcastic way	25	7.7	5
d. Never reducing her self esteem	28	8.6	3
e. Representing her as more aware and able to handle responsibilities	22	6.7	6
f. All the Above	169	51.8	1

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

'All the above' also comes in table 5.1.M as the first choice, followed by 'tackling the problem seriously'. The third choice is 'never reduce the self esteem of the single woman' which reflects the cultural and societal pressure on single woman, followed by 'conducting broad media awareness campaigns'.

5.1.N Participants' Preference about the medium to focus on to improve the image of Spinster

In question no. 32, the medium preferred to improve the image of single woman labeled as spinster is examined through frequencies and percentages where multiple answers are permitted and answers are arranged to explore the priorities of participants in the survey. Table 5.1.N shows the results as following.

Table 5.1.N Frequencies & Percentages on Participants' Preference about the medium to focus*

Participants' Preference about the medium	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
a. Television	103	31.6	2
b. Radio	35	10.7	5
c. Papers	45	13.8	4
d. Internet	21	6.4	6
e. Satellites	48	14.7	3
f. All the Above	171	52.5	1

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

As shown in table 5.1.N, 'all the above' is number one in the priority of choice of participants, followed by TV as a second choice, then satellites take the third rank in choice, while papers take the fourth place, followed by the radio and the internet.

5.1.O Participants' Preference about interpersonal communication that we should focus on to improve the image of Spinster

Table 5.1.O displays the participants preference of interpersonal communication, as mentioned in question 33, to improve the image of spinster through frequencies, percentages and arrangement.

Table 5.1.O Frequencies & Percentages on Participants' Preference about the interpersonal communication to focus*

Participants' Preference about the interpersonal communication	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
a. Family	52	16.0	2
b. Friends	28	8.6	5
c. Both	48	14.7	3
d. Head of the Village/Family	20	6.1	7
e. Sheikh/Priest	26	8.0	6
f. Symposiums	38	11.7	4
g. All the Above	156	47.9	1

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

As displayed in table 5.1.O, 'all the above' is the top priority for the participants, followed by 'family' as a second choice, then as a third choice comes 'both family and friends', 'symposiums' come as a fourth choice, followed by 'friends alone', then the 'Sheikh/Priest', and the 'head of the village/family' comes at the end.

5.1.P Participants' opinion about knowing the actress, or not, and whether she acted the role of spinster or *anas* in the Cinema or not, from their point of view.

To investigate the impact of each character from those who played the role of spinster in the Egyptian cinema, the researcher sets question no. 34 asking about knowing the actresses (which will be considered as question no. 34A) and whether they act the role of spinster or not (question no. 34B). Results in frequencies and percentages are shown in the tables 5.1.P.1 (Appendix 5.3) and 5.1.P.2 (Appendix 5.4). According to question no. 34A, 83.4% of the participants know Soad Hosni, 80.4% of them know Zenat Sedky, Yusra, and Shadia.

Although most of the actresses within the context of this study acted the role of a spinster in the Egyptian cinema, most of participants judge the actresses by appearance and how they look like in the cinema. Therefore, most of participants determine actresses, who are characterized by good looking, as never acted the role of spinster, including: Mervat Amin

(86.8%), Bosi (85.4%), Soad Hosni (84.6%), Faten Hamama (83.5%), Yusra (82.4%), Shadia (82.1%), Laila Fawzy (76.0%), Zezy El Badrawy (70.4%), and Soheer El Morshedy (60.6%), while most of participants connect other actresses with the stereotyping connotation of being spinsters which depend mainly on the actresses' appearance either acting a role of a desperate character or their comic style of acting, determine the actresses who acted the role, including: Sanaa Yunis (87.3%), Zenat Sedky (86.6%), Mary Monib (74.7%), Khairia Ahmed (73.9%), Nabila El Sayed (71.4%), Malak El Gamal (71.3%), Sanaa Gamil (68.2%) Soheer EL Barony (64.6%), and Esaad Yunis (63.6%).

5.1.Q Subsidiary Research Questions and Hypotheses Findings

5.1.Q.1 Subsidiary Research Questions Findings

The inferential statistical method was utilized to test the significance. Inferential statistical method is divided into two categories: parametric and non-parametric. Non-parametric statistics are used with nominal and ordinal measurement category, while the parametric statistics are used for interval and ratio measurement category. Parametric statistics are also used when two variables from each category is used for example one is nominal or ordinal and the other is interval or ratio.

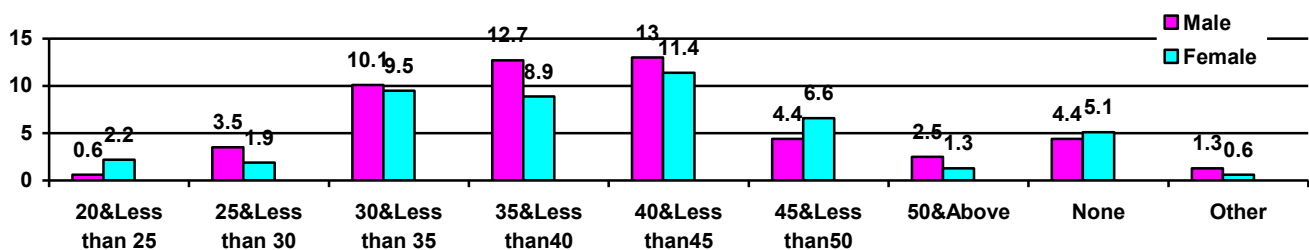
In this study, Non-parametric statistical method is obtained through chi-square and Mann Whitney test. Chi-square value is attained through the two-way contingency table analysis from the variables of perception of single woman with demographics (gender, geographical distribution, religion, age, marital status, educational level, working/not working, and the socio-economic status). Perception of single women is obtained here through question 14 (asking about the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster) with the demographical factors. Also, chi-square is obtained through analyzing depicted image of single woman labeled as spinster in question 26 (A-G) in relation to gender. While Mann-Whitney test is used to find

differences between the image depicted of single woman labeled as spinster in relation to the geographical distribution.

Subsidiary RQ1: Is there a relationship between determining the age of spinsterhood and the demographical variables (gender, geographical distribution, religion, age, marital status, education level, work, and economic status) of the viewers.

Inferential statistics (through chi-square) are obtained from questions 1 to 6, in addition to questions no. 8 to 10 with question 14. Most of the participants emphasize that spinsterhood age starts from the beginning of the thirties until the age of 45, with the highest percent to the age of 40 and less than 45. The following figure shows the relationship between question 14 and gender of the viewer.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.a



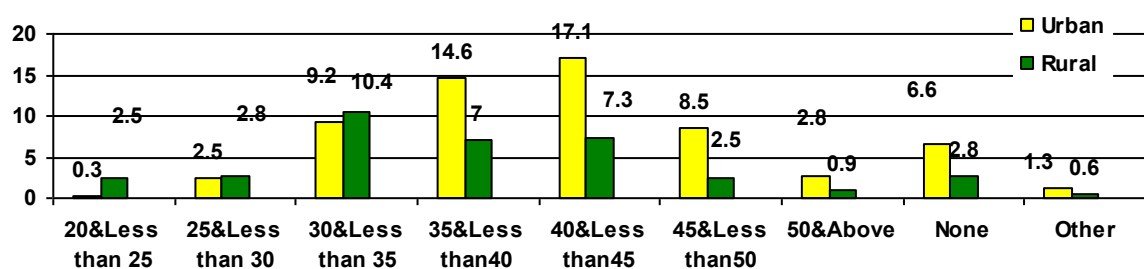
As displayed in figure 5.1.Q.1.a there is no significant relationship between question 14 & gender. This is shown through a contingency coefficient value of .171, and $p = .305$ which is larger than .05. However, It is noteworthy to say that the frequency of the female category which determine the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster at '20 and less than 25' are 7 females, with 2.2%, while only 2 males only agree upon that, with 0.6%. On the contrary, 11 men agree that the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster starts at '25 and less than 30', with 3.5%, while 6 females only, with 1.9% agree on that.

The results show very minute difference between both males ($n = 32$), with 10.1%, and females ($n = 30$), with 9.5%, determining the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster at

'30 and less than 35'. Then, difference appears, as 40 males, with 12.7%, and 28 females, with 8.9% determine the age of '35 and less than 40' as the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster. The highest frequency and percent go with the age of '40 and less than 45' as the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster: 41 males, with 13% agree on that and 36 females, with 11.4%. Although the frequencies and percentages start to increase from the age of 30, they start to decrease after the age of 45. However, a few number: 14 males, with 4.4% refuse that and select 'none' meaning no age for that, and 16 females, with 5.1% agree there are 'none' such age.

Perception of single women obtained through question 14 with the geographical distribution of the viewer is shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.b

Figure 5.1.Q.1.b

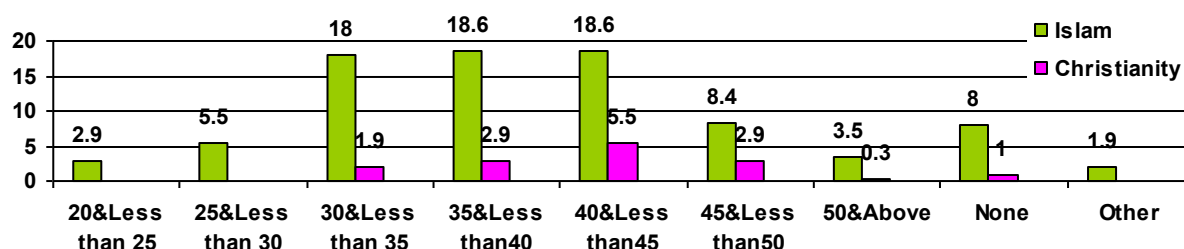


In relation to geographical distribution: urban/rural, the contingency coefficient value is .276, and $p = .001$, and this shows significance that the geographical distribution plays a role in the perception of spinster. This shows that most of the participants living in rural areas view a single woman as a spinster at a younger age, when she is 30 and less than 35, with 10.4%, as the highest percent of all categories, in comparison to those living in urban areas, as most of them view a single woman as a spinster at an age of 40 and less than 45, with 17.1%, the highest percent of all categories. Results for question 14 with the geographical distribution factor show that those from rural areas refer to a single woman as a spinster from the age 20 while those in urban areas do not, and instead refer to her as a spinster from the age 25. What is interesting is that the number

of respondents who refer to single women as spinsters at older ages is lower in rural areas than those from urban areas.

The perception of single woman is obtained through question 14 (asking about the age in which a woman is referred to as a spinster) according to viewers' religion. The following [figure](#) shows the relationship between question 14 and religion of the viewer.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.c



As displayed in figure 5.1.Q.1.c there is a weak significance between question 14 and religion. This is shown through a contingency coefficient value of is .214, and $p = .060$ which is larger than .05. The chart (figure 5.1.Q.1.c) shows that Muslims start to identify single woman as a spinster at the age of 20, while Christians start to identify her at the age of 30.

According to the Muslims' perception of single woman, the figure shows a stable increase in figuring the age of spinster to start from 30 until 45, as 56 Muslims of the participants, with 18%, determine her age to be a spinster to start from '30 and less than 35', while 58 Muslims of the participants, with 18.6%, select the age of '35 and less than 40' is the age for single woman to be referred as a spinster, and another 58 Muslims of the participants, with 18.6%, agree that the age of '40 and less than 45' is the age to be a spinster. On the other hand, 17 Christians, with 5.5%, are the highest percent of Christians who state that the age in which single woman is referred to as a spinster starts from '40 and less than 45'.

The perception of single women is obtained through question 14 (asking about the age in which a woman is titled as spinster) according to the viewers' age. Figure 5.1.Q.1.d shows the relationship.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.d

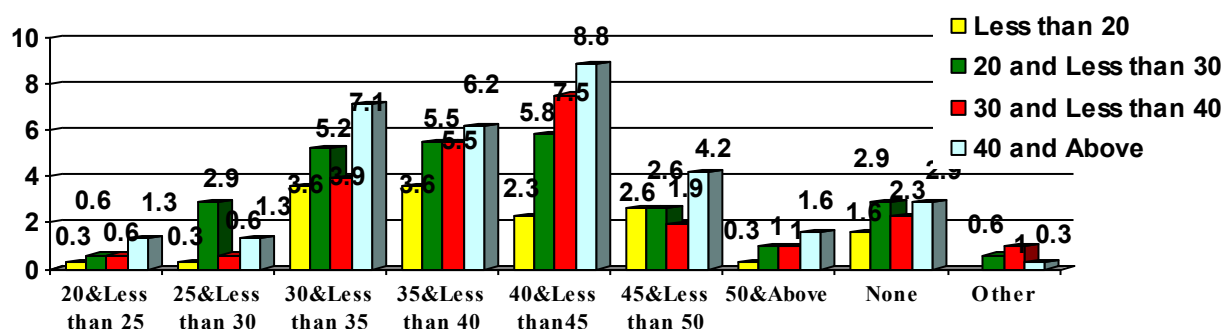
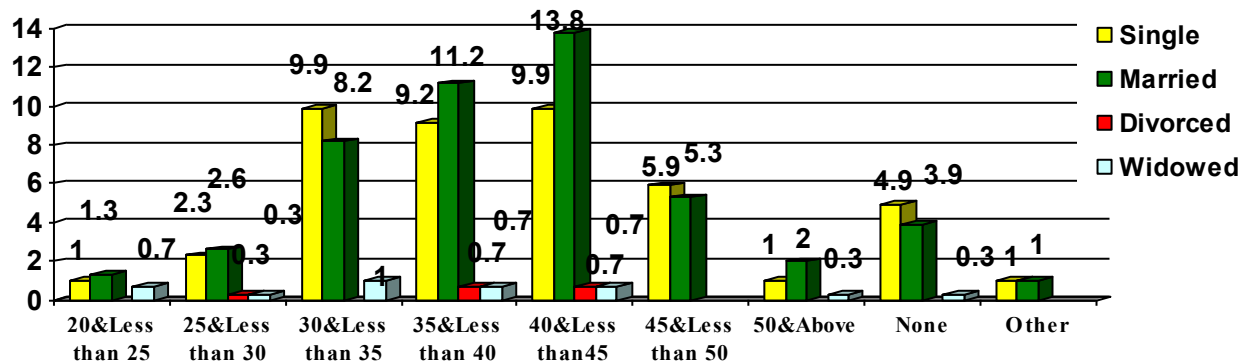


Figure 5.1.Q.1.d shows no significance as the contingency coefficient value is .242, and $p = .744$ which is larger than .05. Results show that most of participants in all categories perceive the age in which a woman is referred to as spinster to start from 30 to 45. The highest percent of persons who are less than 20 agree that the age in which a single woman is referred to as a spinster is from 30 to 40, most of those who are '20 and less than 30' persons see it start 40 with a considerable number of 33 persons, with 10.7%, see it start from 30 to 40. Also, most of those who are '30 and less than 40' with 23 persons, with 7.5%, see that the age starts at 40; a number of 17 persons, with 5.5% consider the age start from 35.

The perception of single women is also obtained here through question 14 of the age of spinster according to viewers' marital status. Figure 5.1.Q.1.e displays the relationship as the following.

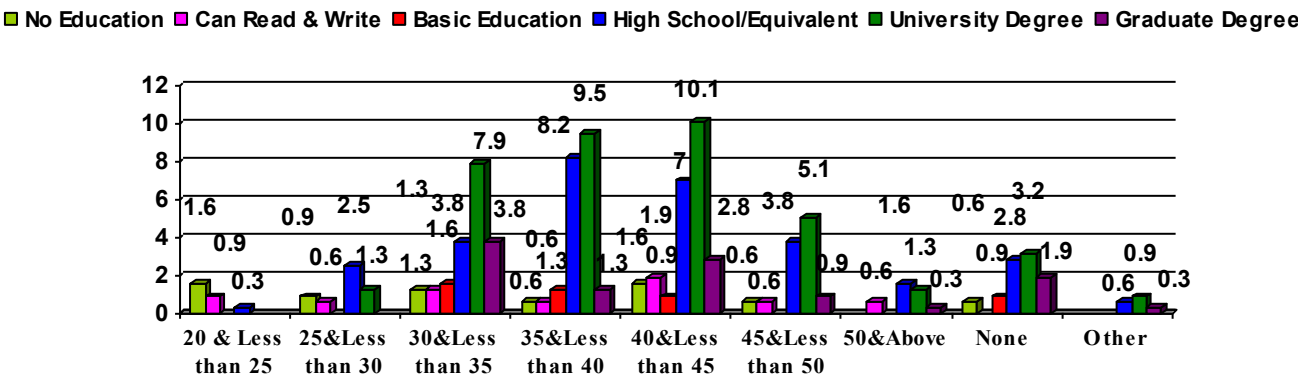
Figure 5.1.Q.1.e



As shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.e there is no significant relationship as the contingency coefficient value is .255, and $p = .635$ which is bigger than .05. From the results, a considerable finding show that the highest frequency of single participants are the ones who start to identify single woman as a spinster which contradicts with married persons whose most of them consider the age starts at 40, but a considerable number considers it from the age of 30 and 35. Single, married, and widowed see the age start from 20, while divorced persons view it starts from 35. Another finding is that a number of single persons ($n= 15$ out of 137), with 4.9%, and married persons ($n= 12$ out of 150), with 3.9% agree that there is no such age by responding 'none'.

The perception of single women is obtained through question 14 of the age of spinster according to the viewers' educational level. Figure 5.1.Q.1.f shows the results.

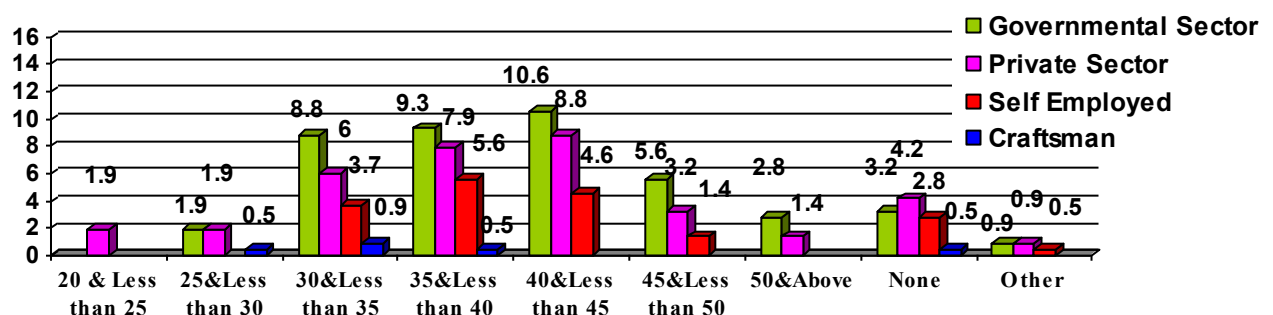
Figure 5.1.Q.1.f



High significance is shown in figure 4.6 as the contingency coefficient value is .454, and $p = .000$, which is smaller than .05. The results show that those with no education, can read and write, and high school/or equivalent agree that the age in which a single woman is referred to as spinster starts from 20 years old. It is interesting to find that those who have university degree state that the age starts from 25 years old this findings contradicts with those who obtain basic education or graduate education, as both of them state that the age start at 30 years. Although the highest percent with no education state the age start at 20, similar percent of the same category state that it start at 40. Also, the most of those who can read and write agree with those who are not educated that the age start from 40 years old. Most of those who obtain basic education say it start at the age of 30. However, those with high education or equivalent state the age start at 45. Most of the university degree participants consider the age to start from 30 to 45. Most of the graduate participants also agree that it starts from 30 years old. The results show education discrepancies as most of those with higher education (university degree or more) may consider single woman as spinster at younger age than none educated or those who can read and write.

The perception of single woman is obtained through question 14 of the age when a woman titled a spinster according to the viewers' type of work. Figure 5.1.Q.1.g illustrates the results.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.g

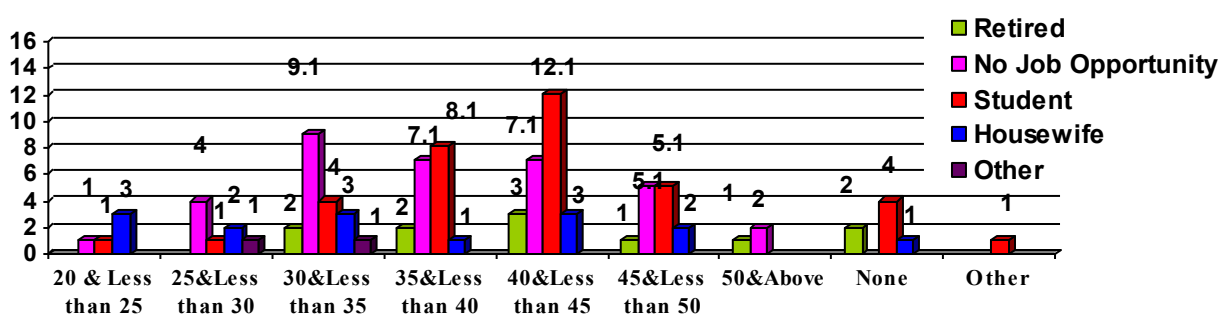


No significance is shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.g, as the contingency coefficient value is .307, and $p = .553$ which is larger than .05. The frequencies and percentages show that only the private sector

employees are those who consider single woman to be referred as a spinster starting from the twentieth. Governmental employees consider her to be referred as spinster from the age of 25 which goes parallel with craftsmen; however, this differs with self-employed persons who consider single woman to be referred as spinster from the age of 30. The highest frequency of both governmental sector employees (n= 23), with 10.6%, and private sector employees (n= 19), with 8.8% see the age in which the single woman is referred to as a spinster is at 40 years old. However, most of the self-employed persons see the age to be at 35 years old. Most of the craftsmen consider the age to be at the age of 30.

The perception of single woman is obtained through question 14 of the age of spinster according to the viewers' who are not working. The following figure shows the relationship between question 14 and viewers who are not working.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.h



As displayed in figure 5.1.Q.1.h there is no significant relationship between question 14 & not working viewers. This is shown through a contingency coefficient value of .504, and $p = .386$ which is larger than .05. From the results shown, the researcher discovers that those who have been working then retired start to view the age of spinster from the age of 30 and above which differs from the housewives who start to view the single woman as a spinster from the age of 20 and above. Also, two persons one is student and the other has no job opportunity agree that the age of spinster start from 20. The highest frequency of those who are retired see that single woman is to be referred to as spinster starting from the age of 40, while most of those who have

no job opportunity see that she starts at the thirties, most of the students consider the age of 40 to be the age in which a woman is to be referred as spinster; and the age starts earlier with housewives as equal high frequencies in that category of 'housewives' chose the age to start at the twentieth, the thirties, and the forties.

Perception of single woman is attained through question 14 of the age of women titled as spinster according to the viewers' socio-economic status. The following figure shows the relationship between question 14 and the economic status of the viewer.

Figure 5.1.Q.1.i

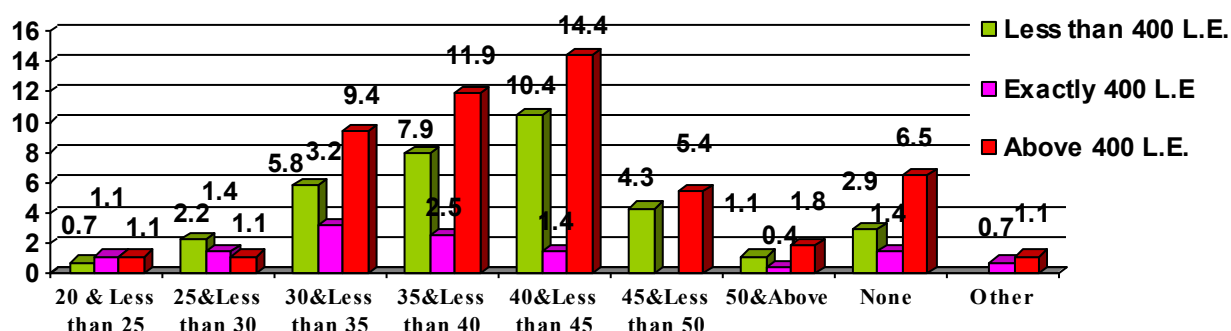
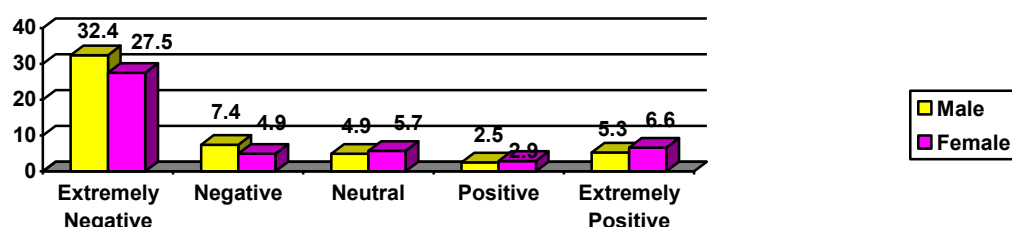


Figure 5.1.Q.1.i displays a weak significant relationship between question 14 and the economic status. This is explained through a contingency coefficient value of .291, and $p = .058$ which is higher than .05. Results show that participants from the three socio-economic status categories start to determine the age in which a single woman referred to as spinster from the age of 20. The highest frequency of those who take 'less than 400 L.E.' states that the age of spinster starts at the age of '40 and less than 45'. Similarly, the highest frequency of those who obtain '400 and above' agree on the same age of '40 and less than 45'; however, the highest frequency of those who obtain 'Exactly 400' see that the age in which the single woman is referred to as spinster is '30 and less than 35'. Although the number increases stably from the age of 30 to 45 according to both who are 'above 400 L.E.' or those who are 'less than 400 L.E.', it decreases also stably in the same age according to those who obtain 'less than 400'.

Subsidiary RQ2: Is there a relationship between how a spinster is depicted in the Egyptian media and gender of the viewers?

It is important to examine the relationship between the single woman's depiction in the media and gender. Relationship is investigated about the perception of how single woman labeled as spinster depicted in the Egyptian media in relation to gender through chi-square which is obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) with question 26A (negative/positive), where some significant results are demonstrated as displayed in figure 5.1.17.1.10

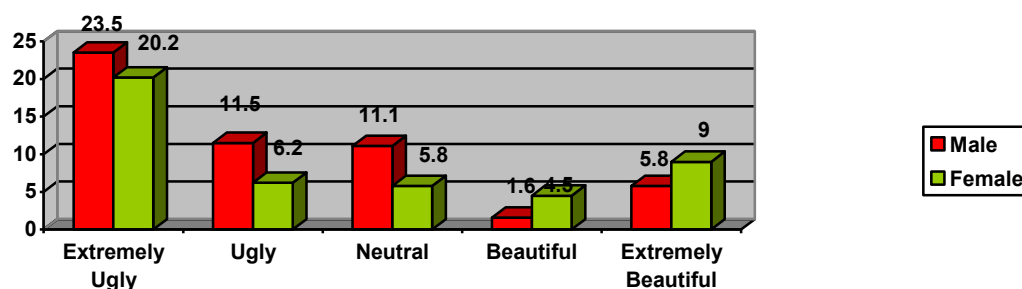
Figure 5.1.Q.1.j



No significant relationship is shown with a contingency coefficient value = .093, and $p = .710$ which is larger than .05. However, results show a similar perception of the depicted image of single woman in the media.

Relationship is also investigated about how a spinster is depicted in the Egyptian media and the gender through chi-square which is obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) with question 26B (ugly/beautiful), where some significant results are demonstrated as displayed in figure 5.1.Q.1.k

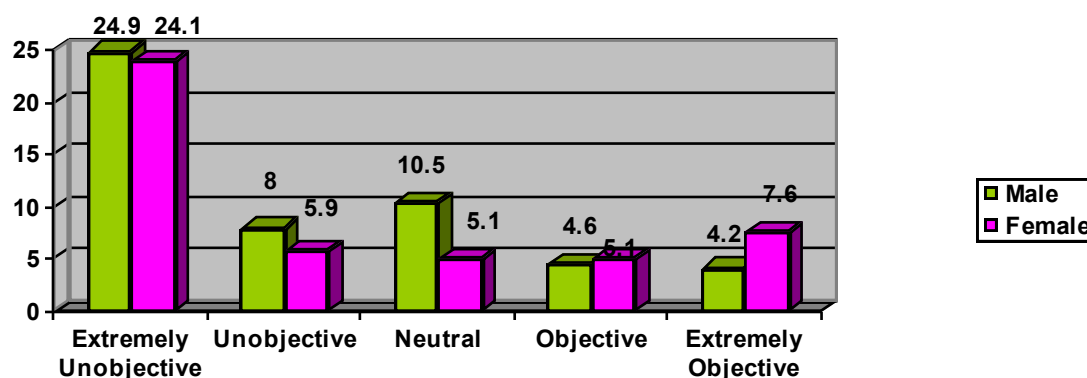
Figure 5.1.Q.1.k



High significant relationship is shown in figure 5.1.17.1.k with a contingency coefficient value = .229, and $p = .009$ which is smaller than .05. Most of the participants' either males, with 23.5%, or females, with 20.2%, agree that the image of single woman depicted as spinster in movies is ugly. However, discrepancies are shown as male participants percent are more than females, when the image is ugly, and vice versa when the image is beautiful, as some participants tend to see this image as a beautiful one.

The depiction of single women being labeled as spinsters in the Egyptian media and the gender through chi-square can be obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) and question 26C (subjective/objective). Results are displayed in figure 5.1.Q.1.1

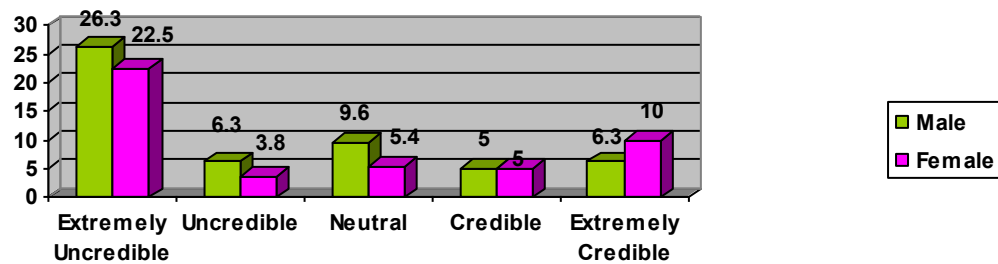
Figure 5.1.Q.1.1



No significant relationship is obtained as the contingency coefficient value is = .172, and $p = .126$ which is larger than .05. However, results show equivalent un-objective connotation with the perception of the depicted image of single woman in the media.

The researcher examines the relationship between participants single woman depicted as spinster in the Egyptian media and the gender through chi-square, which is obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) with question 26D (un-credible/credible). Results are shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.m

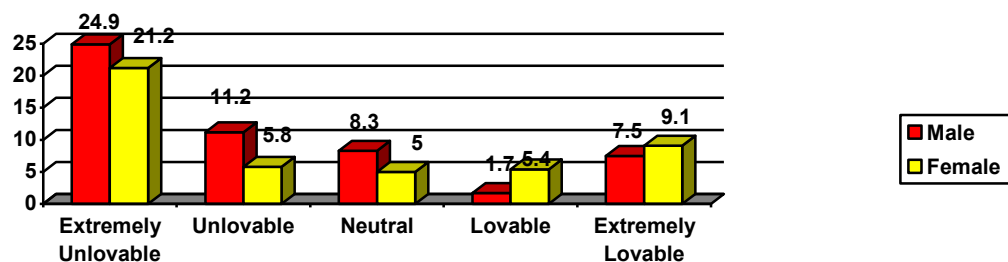
Figure 5.1.Q.1.m



No significant relationship is obtained as the contingency coefficient value is = .156, and $p = .199$ which is larger than .05. no major differences in view between male participants, with 26.3%, and female participants, with 22.5%, who are considering the depicted image of single woman in the media as being un-credible, What was interesting is that results show some discrepancies for female participants who perceive the image as extremely credible are 10% differing from 6.3% of male participants. Results show how females follow and trust the male dominator mutely.

The relationship between participants perception of single woman depicted as spinster in the Egyptian media and the gender is obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) with question 26E (unlovable/lovable). Results are shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.n

Figure 5.1.Q.1.n

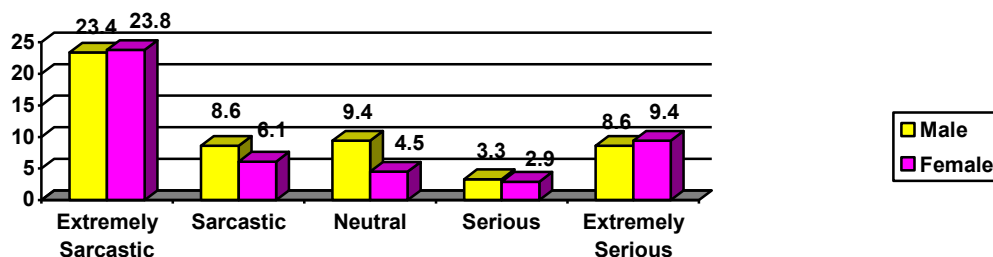


Results show high significant relationship with contingency coefficient value = .208, and $p = .028$ which is less than .05. Although results show agreement on the image as being unlovable, 14.5 % of female participants show higher perception of the image as being a lovable image as the perception differs from their counterparts male participants who states it is lovable, with

9.2%. These findings go with the argument that females mutely follow the agenda of the dominator.

The relationship between the perception of single woman depiction as spinster in the Egyptian media and the gender is obtained from questions no.1 (male/female) with question 26F (sarcastic/serious). Results are shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.o

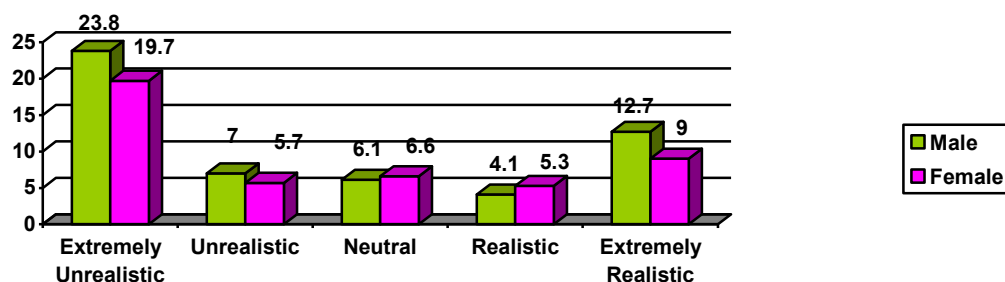
Figure 5.1.Q.1.o



Results show no significant relationship with contingency coefficient value = .133, and $p = .358$ which is larger than .05. Although results demonstrate negative connotation with the image of single women labeled as spinster, no major difference in view is obtained.

The relationship between participants' perception of single woman labeled as spinster in the Egyptian media and gender is obtained from questions no. 1 (male/female) with question 26G (unrealistic/realistic). Results are shown in figure 5.1.Q.1.p

Figure 5.1.Q.1.p



As displayed, no significant relationship is obtained, as the contingency coefficient value is = .087, and $p = .760$ which is larger than .05. However, results here show the least negative connotation with the image of single women labeled as spinster when it is asking whether the image is realistic or not.

One may infer that although participants either males or females agree that the image of single woman depicted as spinster in the media (movies) is negative, unlovable, unobjective, sarcastic, ugly, and unbelievable, they are less willing to express that it is unrealistic, which goes with researcher hypothesis that the image of depicted spinster in the media (movies) affects the perception of the audience.

Subsidiary RQ3: Is there a difference between how a spinster is depicted in the Egyptian media (movies) and geographical distribution (urban/rural) of the viewers?

Mann-Whitney Test is used to find a difference between two independent samples (urban/rural) in relation to the depiction of single woman labeled as spinster in question no. 26 (A-G) and whether the media confirm the single woman's image as a spinster in the society or not in question no. 27. From this test, one may deduce statistical differences between urban and rural areas samples in relation to question 26A, as $z = 1.991$, and $p = .047$ which is less than .05 for the benefit of urban areas which have more accessibility to the media (movies). However, there are no differences obtained in relation to question no. 26(B-G) and question no. 27. Table 5.1.Q.1.q displays the results.

Table 5.1.Q.1.q Test for significant difference between the geographical distribution and their perception to the single woman represented as spinster in the media (movies)

Geographical Distribution Urban/Rural	Q26A Negative Positive	Q26B Ugly/ Beautiful	Q26C Un/object ive	Q26D Un/credible	Q26E Un/lovable	Q26F Serious/ Sarcastic	Q26G Un/real istic	Q27 Confirm Spinster
Z	1.991	1.204	1.412	.630	.052	.175	.911	.067
Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.229	.158	.529	.959	.861	.362	.949

Subsidiary RQ4: Does the Egyptian dramas (movies) play a role in constructing and maintaining the stereotypical image of the single, still-unmarried woman within the Egyptian society?

Answers to subsidiary RQ4 is obtained through question no. 27 in the survey, where 63.4% of participants agree on the role played by the Egyptian movies in constructing the image

of spinster in the Egyptian society. In addition, assurance of the role played by the movies to cultivate that stereotyping image which is obtained through in-depth interviews and the field observation.

5.1.Q.2 Subsidiary Hypotheses

Subsidiary H1: There is a positive relationship between the image of a spinster in Egyptian movies and the image of the spinster in the Egyptian society.

Subsidiary H2: Egyptian movies portray the single, still-unmarried woman as a spinster stereotypically.

Subsidiary hypotheses no. 1 and no. 2 are supported through question no. 26, which show attachment of negative connotation with the image of single woman depicted as spinster in the movies, and question no. 27, which show positive agreement that the image of spinster is ensured and confirmed in the society through the media and drama especially.

Also, results from the content analysis show higher significance in relation to stereotyping the image of single women as spinsters where $p = .000$ in relation to the type and direction.

5.1.R General Findings of the Survey

Findings in this thesis are based on results of the 326 self-administered surveys. The researcher examined the role of culture, religion, and media (especially movies) in stereotyping single, still-unmarried women, through a quantitative analysis of responses that is relevant to participants' perception regarding the single, still-unmarried woman and their definition of the word spinster or *anas*, and how do they determine her age.

Responses demonstrate the role of culture, media in addition to a negative factor of religion. It indicates how single women are affected by such a term, and raises suggestions for change. Negative connotation is demonstrated in relation to single women by being depicted as spinsters, as results show the image is negative, unlovable, un-objective, sarcastic, ugly, and

un-credible with less willing of participants to express that it is unrealistic, which goes with researcher hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the image depicting spinster in the media (movies) and the image of the spinster in the Egyptian society.

5.1.R.1 Main Research Questions Findings

Concerning the dimensions of the problem, it was interesting to find that most of participants define the word spinster as 'a woman past age and not married', 'a woman that train of Marriage left her', and 'a woman with no marriage opportunities'. While 'ugly appearance or behavior' and 'bad reputation' come at the end of ranking with 'others'. The highest percent of the sample select the age of the single woman to be titled as a spinster starting from the age of 30 until the age of 45. This term 'spinster' is discovered that it affects single women psychologically and socially, as it reduces her self-esteem socially.

Participants' perception of single women represented as spinsters in the media especially movies is measured according to the semantic differential bi-polar scale measurement, and a general negative connotation in relation to how the image of spinster in movies is perceived. Media's role and particularly movies are significantly demonstrated in confirming and ensuring the image of single woman as spinster or *anas* in the society. It was interesting to find that most of participants focus on particular actresses with the stereotyping connotation of being spinsters, which depend mainly on the actresses' appearance either acting a role of a desperate character or their comic style of acting.

The highest percent of participants agree that the religious places (Mosque/Church) play an awareness role in solving the spinsterhood (*onousa*) problem, and most of them see the single woman is a victim of this image suggesting change to the term and concept, as they see it as a problematic term.

Regarding the second research question tackling reasons for that problem, 'Women's work' is discovered to be a non problematic reason according to participants. As the highest

percent of participants perceive the reason as lack of appropriate matching between males and females. Psychological factors show that the reason is 'no psychological emotional comfort between both' and 'a woman failed in a love relation refusing to experience another'. According to the economic factors unemployment was found to be the main reason. While the highest percent of participants see no biological factors. The highest percent of participants answering the social factors consider the cause is 'the social low esteem view of the spinster or *anas*'. In relation to the religious factors, the highest percent of participants return the reason to the religion 'prohibition of any relation except marriage', while equal percent of 25.5% see there is 'no religious reasons'.

Investigating the third main research question of this study regarding solution to this problem, some solutions are presented, where religious places' role obtained the highest percent to change this term or concept, followed by the media's role in awareness. Most of participants agree to tackle this problem in the media. Religious programs comes on the top priority in the ranking of participants preferences to tackle this problem in the media, followed by movies which come parallel with symposiums and gatherings. Participants also agree on 'working on solving the problem' as the second choice.

Solutions to improve the image of single woman are answered through 'tackling the problem seriously', 'never reduce the self esteem of the single woman', and 'conducting broad media awareness campaigns. Concerning the mass communication preferences, TV and satellites took the first two ranking of participants' choice in relation to their preference to tackle the problem, while family came as the first choice in relation to interpersonal communication.

5.1.R.2 Subsidiary Research Questions and Hypotheses Findings

Inferential Non-parametric (Chi-Square & Mann Whitney Test) statistical method is conducted to test the significance. According to subsidiary RQ1, results show significant

relationship between determining the age of spinster and both the geographical distribution and educational level variables, while weaker or no significance is demonstrated according to the other variables. Most of participants determine the age of a spinster to start from 30 until 45 years old.

Answering subsidiary RQ2, relationship is investigated through Q26(A-G) about the perception of how single woman who is labeled as spinster depicted in the Egyptian media in relation to gender, where significance is obtained according to Q26B (ugly/beautiful), Q26E (Un/Lovable), while no significance is obtained to the rest of the question items. What was interesting is that although participants either males or females agree that the image of single woman depicted as spinster in the media (movies) is negative, unlovable, unobjective, sarcastic, ugly, and unbelievable, they are less willing to express that it is unrealistic, which goes with researcher hypothesis that the image of depicted spinster in the media (movies) affects the perception of the audience.

In relation to subsidiary RQ3, Mann-Whitney Test is used to find a difference between question no. 26 (A-G) and question no. 27 in relation to the geographical distribution of participants. Significance is demonstrated in relation to question 26A due to the benefit of urban areas, which have more accessibility to the media (movies). No other significance was obtained in relation to question no. 26(B-G) and question no. 27.

Answers to subsidiary RQ4 is positively obtained through question no. 27 in the survey, as participants agree on the role played by the Egyptian movies in constructing the image of spinster in the Egyptian society.

Subsidiary hypotheses no. 1 and no. 2 are supported through question no. 26, which show attachment of negative connotation with the image of single woman depicted as a spinster in the movies, and question no. 27, which show positive agreement that the image of spinster is ensured and confirmed in the society through the media and drama especially.

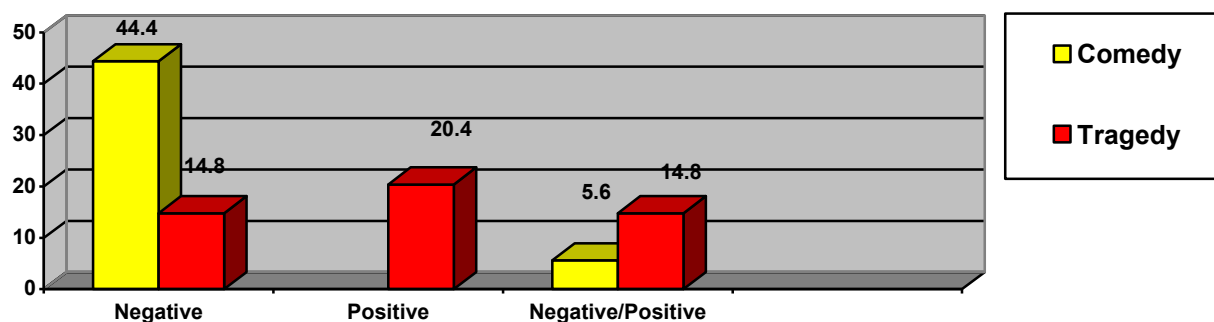
5.2 Content & Qualitative Analyses

The researcher uses both the content analysis to analyze the type and direction of the cinema movies to investigate their depiction of single women, and the qualitative analysis to examine the psychological/social effects of singlehood on single women as well as to come close to the problem from their perspective.

5.2.A Content Analysis

The researcher analyzes a purposive sample of 54 Egyptian movies since the start of the cinema in 1924 until 2005, which has been classified according to their type, 27 drama/comedy and 27 drama/tragedy (See Appendix 3). To examine whether there is a relation between type of the movie and direction: negative, positive, or negative/positive, chi-square was conducted. Perception of the actress acting as a spinster is obtained through investigating the relationship between the type and direction of the movies. The following figure (figure 5.2) shows the relationship between type and direction.

Figure 5.2



High significance are displayed in relation to the type: comedy/tragedy, with contingency coefficient value = .532, and $p = .000$ which is smaller than .05, and this shows significance that the type of the movies plays a role in their direction. Although most of the movies show single women negatively, all movies show them as desperate and failed to marry, but the situation differs as single woman may be the reason depicted in the negative direction, the surroundings

are the reason, so she is depicted in positive direction, or both she and the surroundings are the reason for her singlehood depicted in a negative/positive direction.

5.2.A.1 Content Analysis General Findings

In relation to subsidiary H2 about Egyptian movies portraying the single, still-unmarried woman as a spinster stereotypically, results from the content analysis show higher significance in relation to stereotyping the image of single women as spinsters where $p = .000$ in relation to the type and direction.

5.2.B General Findings of the Qualitative Analysis of "Feeling Cold"

According to a docudrama, titled "Feeling Cold"²⁰, by Hala Lotfy, it tackles the lives of a group of single women. They are either Muslims or Christians who started to worry from loneliness after growing up to a certain age without being connected to a man as a husband.

The docudrama tackles some weaknesses in the Egyptian society that lead to such phenomenon. Talks about sex and the reproductive system are forbidden at schools. Interference of society in people's life when it comes to marriage, for example, when a person wants to marry a girl, another woman may, be a relative of the girl herself, advice him to marry the younger sister better than the older one.

Also, after a long relation between a girl and a man in a telephone and after she get connected to him spiritually, he may tell her, sorry we cannot marry because when I saw you, I did not like you. One of the women in the docudrama says, "You can make friendships as much as you can, but you cannot marry except the one who wants to marry you."

This shows the inequality and discrimination towards women. From the documentary, one may understand that a girl is a toy in the hands of a man in the Egyptian society; when he wants to start a relation he starts it, and when he wants to end it immediately he do. One may

²⁰ Feeling Cold is a metaphor for the situation single women are psychologically and socially suffering from. Thanks to Hala Lotfy, cinema director in the National Cinema Center, who offered me her docudrama for the sake of my research.

also infer from the docudrama that these girls have lost their years by being involved in useless relationships without having a life or practice sex. Relationship(s) here do not mean sex relations, but telephones, going out, and meetings. One of those girls related the reason for not getting married or having a family to the telephone. "The telephone is the problem perhaps if there is no telephone the situation may be changed", she says. Perhaps, she is trying to say that the problem lurks in the modernity and the new technologies. Another problem that these women face is the more they grow up, the more they lack opportunities or suitable men. Within the docudrama, these women express some signs of depression.

In the docudrama, one of the girls says, "my cousin is younger than me very much and she is engaged." She adds that she prefers to be busy and abandon going to weddings. Another one says that the problem is the people themselves because even if "she is pretending happiness, they start to make you feel that you are failure." Another girl states, "I do not go to weddings" because when I went "I felt I did not belong. It was a shit day." She adds that she kept asking herself why she does not get married. According to her, "Why is this kid getting married, and I'm not." This docudrama shows the face of the problem, and how single women are suffering in the Egyptian community.

5.3 In-depth Interviews

Being close to the respondent, the interviewer, easily, enjoys tackling issues that might be taboo in other methods. In addition, there may be certain groups for which in-depth interviews is the only practical technique such as within the scope of this study interviewing a group of single, still unmarried women starting from 25 until 45 years old. The researcher must admit that she has learned and obtained guidance from her interviews with the experts of the field.

5.3.A In-depth Interviews with Single, Unmarried women

Most of the nine interviewed single women agreed that the society - through their family and the surroundings - practice a considerable pressure on them to get married. Even parents and especially mothers kept stressing them to marry, and when a suitable suitor asks to marry one of them, their families start to impede the process of marriage through many requirements. One of the female interviewee starts to narrate a story of another female friend that a suitor asks the mother to marry her daughter, and the daughter loves him, but the mother refuses. So the suitor kept coming and going until the mother died. Then, they married, but unfortunately, she cannot give birth to children because her period is gone.

Most of the single women relate the reasons for being still unmarried to either finding no suitable partner or their families' exaggeration in their requirements or sometimes impeding the process of marriage for no fundamental reason. They identify the suitable partner as the one who is suitable in education and work to accept marrying him in addition to his ability to buy a house and furnish it. Most of them also agree about the definite role of media in deforming their image within the drama. They all agree that the main reason is that depiction of the media, which imposes another pressure upon them to pursue any marriage opportunity in order not to become like the spinsters in the drama.

In-depth interviews with single, unmarried women have exposed the role of cultural norms, and how women especially single ones are pressured in the Egyptian society. They also refer to the inequality and discrimination of single women.

5.3.B In-depth Interviews with Experts

The researcher has been acquainted to different aspects of the problem under study through the following 12 in-depth interviews.

5.3.B.1 Psychology/Psychiatrists Experts

Nashae N. Said (Personal Communication, February 18th, 2007) indicates the importance of marriage for persons and especially woman psychologically, he states that "Marriage is important due to its advantages, and they are: satisfaction of sexual needs which is usually can be satisfied through marriage in our culture". Said states that the single woman labeled as spinster is more to suffer from psychological depression, frustration, and low self esteem; moreover, as long as she gets older, suffering from such psychological diseases increases, as she sees her friends and colleagues are getting married; however, she did not succeed in forming a family until this age. According to Said's opinion, spinsterhood may start from the age of 30, which increased from the last two decades where spinsterhood starts from the twentieth. She may be viewed as a complicated, psychological destroyed and less than her colleagues; a depreciating view, which the media, through drama, cultivate and enhance.

He states, "Our oriental societies look for the spinster with much stigma as a disability or great disadvantage. Many laymen and average middle class look for a spinster with lots of suspicions as queer or complicated or having a deformity just for one reason that she did not marry. That look to the spinster might be less stigmatized in higher social class who has more liberal and open-minded look for life in general. As in Western societies, being a spinster is a life style; anyone can choose to live with. So, I think there is no stigma about being not married until a certain age" (Said, 2007). Said refers to a group of cases that visited him seeking remedy. For more information see Appendix 4.1.1.

5.3.B.2 Religious Men

Sheikh Ali Hafez, Imam of Fatma El Zahraa Mosque (Personal Communication, May 15, 2007) points out that single woman is not rejected, but respected in Islam, as Virgin Mary herself was single. He refers to many verses that order single women to keep themselves chaste and restore her dignity, until Allah enriches them. However, he blames the cultural heritage and

the media, which label women as spinsters and distort their image For more information see (Appendix 4.1.2).

Bishop Joseph Sarraf, Bishop of the Chaldeans in Egypt (Personal Communication, March 12th, 2007) stresses on the dignity of woman. About his opinion about the term spinster, he says that this word should be absolutely deleted, and never to be used. He says there is nothing called *onousa*. He points out that the media, which always help in forming the public opinion, should help in deleting that term completely. "All these are African traditions. There is no such a thing in Christianity, as woman should protect her dignity. The society always criticizes; however, there is no religion in the world that forces woman to marry or enforce marriage as obligatory" (Translike). He states that the whole society must cooperate and play a role to solve that problem. It is not only the role of the church. He also stresses on the role of home in addition to the important role of the media, as they help in forming the public opinion. The media should be a productive one that should construct and remedy For more information see (Appendix 4.1.2).

Priest Yonan Samir Wengt, an Orthodox priest (Personal Communication, April 16, 2007) stresses that this phenomenon starts to increase recently due to different factors especially economic factors. Priest Yonan adds that the society and the media start to marketize the spinsterhood issue as a material for laugh, and start to tackle it in a comic frame through the drama: movies, series, and plays. The media are active participants in that as they depict the single woman in a comic ugly image. The media instead should tackle the issue and try to examine the reasons objectively. He asserts that the church plays its role through awareness programs for the youth. He also emphasizes that the Christian girl is like the Muslim one, both of them are suffering from the same problem due to the perception of the society to the single woman as a spinster. (For more information see Appendix 4.1.2).

5.3.B.3 Media Experts

Media experts included in this study are an official media speaker, and two anchors, one male and one female.

5.3.B.3.a Official Media Speaker

Ambassador Ayman EL Kafas, the Chairman of the State Information Service (Personal Communication, April 29th, 2007) asserts that the word spinster (*anas*) or the situation itself affects the woman negatively because the word means to describe that the woman has certain deficiency. El Kafas refers to some reasons behind singlehood in Egypt, such as the economic reasons that lead to the increase in the age of both males and females. He refers this problem to a wrong inherited cultural heritage in addition to some wrong perceptions that have no scientific significance. He adds that the main reason for spinsterhood is that the culture does not encourage woman to feel the sense of the self or to feel she is independent, instead the culture force her to feel she cannot be independent in contrast with the man.

According to the role of the media, El Kafas does not believe that the media play their role sufficiently to solve the issue. He believes that the media as a mirror for the culture of the society depict single women in drama as a desperate, complicated, or spiteful. The drama always depicts single women negative frame, instead of depicting that life is choice, that perhaps the female, who did not marry, is very successful, and that singlehood does not mean she is less than her resemblances who married. (For more information read Appendix 4.1.3.1).

5.3.B.3.b Media Persons

Moataz El Demerdash, an anchor in EL Mahwar Channel, (Personal Communication, April 19th, 2007) states that the Egyptian society is a conservative society that cannot apply illegitimate sexual relations, which are spreading in other Western societies. He also highlights that the only way to correct the image of single women who are titled as "*Awanes*" is through

presenting positive and successful models of them in the media, art, drama, and in everything because it is not her fault, but that is a result of a social circumstances. However, he himself sees that the media did not distort the image of single woman in the society. "I myself laugh on that as it is considered in a comic frame, and comedy is offering me entertainment, which is one of the functions of media, however, on the personal level, it does not change my opinion about the spinster at all."

He adds that this issue is not separated from the general issue of furthering the women's role in parliament, ministries, local councils, and media. According to the spinsterhood problem, he believes that the culture of the society should change and the media should play a role in that. Not only spinsters, but also there are other stereotypical images in the society which discriminate against certain groups (Appendix 4.1.3.2).

Marwa Sallam, a female former anchor in AL Nas Channel, and recently an anchor in ABC Arabic Economic Channel (Personal Communication, April 19th, 2007) sees that the society should change their notions and people should care for each other. We can focus on the positive side of a single woman that she is a professor, anchor, and a teacher. Sallam points out that the media, as a mirror of the society and culture, enhance that image. "People take everything from the media. For instance, if I kept watching a character for around 20 years as the media depict the single woman with messy hair and specific appearance, idiot, with all bad characteristics, and all people laugh on her; therefore, forcefully, in the unconscious, once the word *anas* is mentioned, this certain depicted image will stick to my mind. "Therefore, definitely, the media play a strong role in cultivating this image" (Sallam).

Sallam states that the problem of spinsterhood is a moral problem, "if everything is available now for the man, why should he go and tie himself with marriage and its burdens." Another point that affect that issue is the video clips, as they have negative effects, every man is dreaming to have the body of a celebrity such as Haifaa Wahby at home. She also refers to

the state of non confidence or no trust that occurs recently between men and women(Appendix 4.1.3.2).

5.3.B.4 Cinema & Theater Directors and Critics

Fawzy Soliman, a cinema senior critic (Personal Communication, February 14, 2007) emphasizes on the main role of the cultural heritage in distorting the image of single women. He adds that the media play an important role in cultivating an ugly, terrible image in the mind of audience in relation to the single woman.

Mohamed Abu El Hassen, theater director (Personal Communication, March 1, 2005) states, " when I hear the word *anas*, immediately, it comes to my mind the actress Malek El Gamal in the Egyptian Movie *EL Shomoa El Sawdaa* "The black Candles", although she was secretly married in the movie." He adds, "Actually we, as drama makers, did not remedy this spinsterhood or *onousa* problem. "We tackle it always in a comic frame" (Translike). He highlights "the absence of drama remediation for this issue on the theater, as most plays, which are shown on the theater, talking even about women's problems, are very few because the man was always the spotlight and the center of attention. These words support the muted group theory assumption. He relates the problem to socio-economic circumstances. Abu El Hassen states that the society in general and the media in particular still view the single woman as a spinster or *anas*, although she has been educated, and she is working like man in the society, and he adds that this the image should be changed, and we should tackle it socially and economically, and not just demonstrate her image in a comic form. Abu El Hassen also mentions that even the women writers did not do that: "I think they also did not do their duty properly concerning that issue." (See Appendix 4.1.4.)

That holds up with the assumption that woman is incapable to express her opinion in the "dominant masculine discourse"; however, man is capable to impose his opinion of the

world on every person because he is the dominator. Whenever, woman expresses a point of view, it is not hers.

According to Hala Galal, a female cinema director (Personal Communication, March 1, 2007), she states that she is not convinced with the presence of this word, and the girl is not restricted to it. She adds that her sister who did not married except at the age of 38 years old, no one could label her as that because it is her own choice.

According to Maged Habashy (Telephone Interview, November 24, 2007), the media tackles the issue from three different scopes. They either tackle the issue in a comic frame that did not remedy the problem, tackle it as a social case that is crucial within the society, and they expose it to the society to look for a solution and this is the role of the media, or even the media did not tackle it either positively or negatively. Unfortunately, the movies which tackle the problem in a comic way is the one which affect the society greater, and even when the movies tackle this problem positively never tackle it as an exclusive problem but within the context of other social problems such as *Bedayia We Nehayia* and *Ahl El Kema*. He adds that this problem is related to political, economic, social, cultural, and ideological reasons. The media did not practice any role to solve the problem they only expose it. He relates the reason of the social pressure for the cultural heritage which is mainly the cause for pressuring women especially Islam which insists on the importance of marriage that "marriage is half the religion". He states that this is the main reason for this problem, which exists in Arab/Islamic countries however, this notion does not exist outside.

Khaled Gamal, a cinema director, (Personal Communication, May 21, 2007) asserts that the image of *anas* constantly appears as a minor character, and that she has a certain deficiency that makes people cannot sympathize with her. Gamal emphasizes the role of culture in labeling single woman as a spinster; however, he states that he himself cannot depict the spinster as a successful person in society. Comedy is always connected with the bizarre going

far from the common, and the spinster is characterized by being unusual. If a man reaches any age, even in his seventies, he can marry. However, a woman can not if she exceeds a certain period, the age of maturity, and she will be labeled as spinster, for she has failed to accomplish her duty in the society. Thus, the role of drama is to focus on any deficiency.

5.3.C General Findings of In-depth Interviews

It is interesting to find out through the in-depth interviews that most of the interviewees, the religious men, media persons, cinema and theater directors, critics, and the psychiatrist, agree on the role of culture, social norms and traditions in distorting the image of single women. Most of the interviewees, especially the psychiatrist, agree that single woman is affected psychologically and socially by the title or the concept, as it leads to reduce her self-esteem in the society. In addition, most of them agree on the role played by the media to tarnish or stereotype the image of single women.

Although most of the directors admit the presence of the problem in the media depiction, one of them, Khaled Gamal sees that comedy which mainly depends on people's deficiencies can not present the spinster as a successful person because her main role or duty in life is to marry and bring children. Unfortunately, he neglects her new role in society as an educated/working person who shares man in developing the society. Going back to the in-group/out-group and how married woman, the in-group, are better than the out-group, as he states that the society cannot accept the unmarried woman. Again, a male perspective that female mutely accepts. Continuing with that, the female director, Hala Galal, a married person, is not convinced with the existence of such a title or such a pressure on single woman, which may be good if she really applies it to drama through presenting single women as successful ones who are independent and have other roles in life in order to contradict the perception of the masculine society in which we live. As the theater director himself admits that female writers themselves ignore writing about that issue.

Although all religious men state that the mosque and church are playing their role in solving that problem, they insist that people should return to their religion instead of pressuring single women for not being married which may lead her at the end to a failure marriage. She has the choice to marry, and no one should force her against that. Furthermore, they state that the media should play a role in, at least, depicting the truth instead of stereotyping single women as an ugly, idiot, and spinster, as people listen to the media more than they listen or visit the religious places. Therefore, the media from their point of view should be committed to inform the truth objectively without stereotyping any group of people within the society. Another important finding that needs deliberate investigation in further studies is the moral factor and the effect of video clips on marriage delays.

Subsidiary H1 and H2 are significantly supported through in-depth interviews conducted with experts of the field.

Religious men state the reasons for marriage delays of women in Egypt is due to education because now woman stays longer to be educated, and that means that single women should not be blamed for being unmarried until later ages because they have other targets in life which may lead to marriage celibacy. However, the problem one may infer is that religious men kept insisting on the importance of marriage to avoid adultery to the extent that this problematic view has accompanied the application of Islam.

5.4 Field Observations

5.4.A Respondents' Perceptions of the Problematic Term 'Spinsterhood'

Shaaban Abd El Hamid, an uneducated farmer, states that a woman should marry around the age of 20, and sometimes at 14 years old. He adds that a woman labeled as a spinster when she is 30 or 35 years old. He relates her singlehood to destiny. He adds that we cannot label man

as a bachelor or *bayer* even if he is 40 or more because he can marry at any time once money and financial abilities are available.

Refaat Ibrahim, a factory worker, indicates that the village differs from the urban area because it is still a closed society that still applying traditions. According to their role in helping in matchmaking and eradicating this title that discriminate woman, he indicates that the participants are only a small group that needs help from others, and he stresses on the important role of newspapers, television, religious places, and schools.

Rabie Selim, another 28-single male participant, graduated from a Al Azhar religious Institution for Teachers, points out that the woman is guilty, and she is responsible for that because most of the women nowadays are dreaming of a certain image of a man, neglecting the importance to have a man who has morals and religion. In addition to the economic problems facing the youth to get a house and furnish it, he states that he himself is suffering from lack of financial abilities to marry. He also adds that if there is a wicked man, but he has money, he will marry, something that is contradicted by the factory worker who insist that he will never give his daughter to a person like such even if he is a 'head of a village'.

Mai Refaat, a 16 years old girl in her intermediate school, states that the woman becomes a spinster because sometimes she loves someone and he then leaves her because "he might say that she has went out with me, so I cannot trust her because she may go out with someone else." She states, "this woman is guilty, not the man himself, because he did not force her to go out with him. She should not go out with him like what we see nowadays in urban areas. If she is good, she would have never date anyone outside, but instead she should tell that guy, I have a family come and ask them for my hand."

According to the housewife of the *mandara*, she agrees with Mai's point of view, and she states if a woman wants to marry she should follow that track, or else it is up to her. Also, she states, "according to Islam, we are forbidden to call her a spinster."

Mosaad Saad, a driver states that this is the role of the mosque or church to warn people to delete words like *anas*, *bayera* from the society because they are the most trustful source. He adds such way of thinking should be changed through religious men arguing, "if a minister announces that *anas* or *bayera* is an unaccepted term or concept to describe or label a single woman with, no one will listen to him; however, if the religious man mentions that everyone will obey him."

Bataa Selim, the daughter of the housewife, who hosts the gathering, is 27 years old, and she does not want to marry unless she is convinced with a person. She states she will not agree, unless she finds a suitable one. Most of the suitors who asked to marry her, from her point of view, are not suitable, and she requests that her mum not insist that she marry any of the suitors.

Her two unmarried sisters, Souma and Naeima, emphasizes that spinsterhood is considered to be a problem within the Egyptian society, and the urban areas are suffering from it more than the rural areas.

5.4.B General Findings of Field Observations

Subsidiary H1 and H2 is supported from the field observation. All the participants agree that words such as spinster (*anas*) or *bayera* are inherited in our culture, and it is not related to religion, but it is transmitted through generations. They all state that the image of single woman is distorted in the media, as they all remember characters who are famous acting that role, such as Zenat Sedky. They all agree that the rural areas are closed conservative communities, which

differ from urban ones. Some refer to the media as a factor in changing the notions of girls especially the TV and satellites.

The field observation shows the apparent role of the social norms and culture in this problematic phenomenon. Reasons for singlehood are stated as being related to destiny, however, a masculine agenda quickly swim on the surface when they admit that there is no problem if a man stays longer without marriage. One single male participants insists that woman is guilty because she is dreaming of a husband that she will not find due to the economic factors.

According to the media effects on women in the village, most of them insist that the village society is still stick to its norms and traditions; however, there was a debate that the village woman was changed than before after watching the satellites, and how there is no trust any more. Participants also emphasize the important role of, first, religious men and, second, the media to reform the image of single women within the society.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions

Singlehood is considered to be a growing problem in Egypt due to several reasons, such as the social, personal, religious, economic, psychological, and demographical factors. The presence of 13.659.314 million single persons, either males or females, in the age of marriage may be considered as an indicator for the significance of examining such an issue. Shortage of previous studies that investigate the Egyptian media dimension in relation to the singlehood problem or what is labeled as spinsterhood is obvious.

Applying the social construction of reality theory to the study, as it shows how people shape unconsciously the world due to their interactivity through daily life, and how they spread this constructed reality as knowledge justified. Language is a main pillar to convey this knowledge creates concepts, such as the spinster concept not only in Egypt or Arab/Islamic countries, but in most of the world, and through language we reach a common perception about this issue. Media have actively played a role in producing and spreading language, and thus, shaping and constructing the reality. This power, granted to media, has placed responsibility on them to depict reality objectively, as people unconsciously believe the media's depictions as factual truth. Media's negative representation of cultural stereotypes influences and directs viewers to support the prevailing cultural traditions. The theory shows the misrepresentation of reality by the mass media, and how social groups are un-objectively depicted. Based on this biased representation of reality, the researcher supports what she previously hypothesized that the Egyptian people have a predetermined notion the characteristics and looks of the single woman. These perceptions are dominating the Egyptians' minds (heads) based on the picture shaped and constructed by the mass media, regardless of its accuracy.

From a feminist perspective, it is discovered that single women are stereotypically labeled as spinsters and are being identified as the out-group within the scope of this study. However, what was interesting is that women in general and single women especially are

following that hidden masculine agenda, by complying to the pressure practiced upon them in daily life in addition to acceptance of certain actresses who agree to play a role that make them a material for laughter for the benefit of achieving the goal of that agenda.

Main RQ-1) what are the different dimensions of the problem?

Findings of main RQ-1 are divided into 3 dimensions: The respondents' definition of the word spinster and the age they determine for a woman to be called a spinster, measuring the participants' perception towards the psychological, social, and self-esteem factors affecting a single woman due to being called a spinster, and the participants' perception of the media representation of the single woman.

In this Masters' thesis, the researcher has examined the role played by culture, social norms, and media – particularly film – in shaping the perception of spinsterhood or *onousa* phenomenon, and how actresses who acted the role of spinsters in a specific bizarre way within the Egyptian movies affect the audience as a certain frame of a spinster is depicted in their minds which lead this image to be a closer one to the reality.

6.1 Role of Culture

From the survey, the role of culture is supported in stereotyping single, still-unmarried women, as participants' opinion is obtained, through frequencies and ranking, regarding the single, still-unmarried woman and their definition of the word spinster or *anas*, and how do they determine her age.

Based on the answers of respondents, the researcher has clarified the definition for this stereotypical term spinster: 'a woman past age and not married', 'a woman that train of Marriage left her', and/or 'a woman with no marriage opportunities'. Spinsterhood becomes a prominent label for women once they reach their thirties until the age of 45, with the highest percentage of

women ages 40 to 45 being given the identity. This term affects single woman psychologically, socially, and reduces her self-esteem, for single woman is a victim and not a criminal to be labeled a spinster. 85.6% of the participants agree that there are better terms to use in preference to the word spinster.

The perception of single women obtained in relation to geographical distribution: urban/rural, the contingency coefficient value is .276, and $p = .001$, shows that most of the participants living in rural areas view a single woman as a spinster at a younger age, when she is 30 and less than 35, with 10.4%, as the highest percent of all categories, in comparison to those living in urban areas, as most of them view a single woman as a spinster at an age of 40 and less than 45, with 17.1%, the highest percent of all categories. An interesting finding is that the number of participants from rural areas decreases in comparison to those from urban areas in referring to a single woman as a spinster at older ages. The perception of single woman according to viewers' religion differs in the study, as Muslims start to identify single woman as a spinster at the age of 20, while Christians start to identify her at the age of 30. A stable increase in figuring the age of spinster, according to Muslims, indicates that it starts from 30 until 45, while most Christians state that the age in which single woman is referred to as a spinster starts from '40 and less than 45'.

The highest frequency of both governmental sector employees ($n= 23$), with 10.6%, and private sector employees ($n= 19$), with 8.8% see the age in which the single woman is referred to as a spinster is at 40 years old. However, most of the self-employed persons see the age to start at 35 years old, while most of the craftsmen consider the age to be at the age of 30. This supports the presence of difference according to the type of work.

No significant relationship between determining the age and not working viewers is obtained. However, the researcher discovers some differences that those who have been working then retired start to view the age of spinster from the age of 30 and above which

differs from the housewives who start to view the single woman as a spinster from the age of 20 and above.

To investigate the role of culture in stereotyping single women, the researcher examines people's perception according to how single women are affected through both kinds of descriptive statistics: data distribution by using tables and summary statistics through the mean and standard deviation. The researcher investigates how the term spinster affects the single women through three statements: "The term spinster or *anas* affects woman psychologically", "The term spinster or *anas* affects the woman socially", and "The term spinster or *anas* reduces the self-esteem of the woman socially".

According to the first statement, "The term spinster or *anas* affects the woman psychologically", 89.2% of the participants agree with the statement; however, 80.1% of the participants agree with the second statement, "The term spinster or *anas* affects the woman socially", 56.3% of participants agree with the third statement, "The term spinster or *anas* reduces the self esteem of the woman socially".

6.2 Role of Media

Participants' perception of spinster presented in movies is measured according to the semantic differential bi-polar scale measurement. Results show a negative connotation with the image of single woman depicted as spinster in the Egyptian media especially movies. Likert Scale is used to examine the Media's role and particularly movies whether ensuring the image of spinster or *anas* in the society or not. Responses show positive agreement to the statement.

Knowing the actress, or not, and whether she acted the role of spinster or *anas* in the cinema or not, is another question that investigate the role of media in cultivating the spinster's image in the participants' perception. The researcher examines the effects of the actresses on the participants and whether they act the role of spinster or not. What is interesting is that participants when they define the spinster at the beginning, they define it as the passed age

woman or who train of marriage left her. However, when they start to choose the actresses who acted the role, results show highest percent in identifying the actresses who acted a role of spinster depending on their depicted physical appearance or their unusual way of acting, including: Sanaa Yunis (87.3%), Zenat Sedky (86.6%), Mary Monib (74.7%), Nabila El Sayed (71.4%).

The researcher conducted a content analysis to examine the role of film in stereotyping single women, and the results show that single women are depicted as spinsters within the drama (moves), either comedy or tragedy, they are all depicted as desperate without (or pursuing for) a husband, either they are good looking or ugly, or acting a serious or sarcastic role.

In addition, most of participants, in the in-depth interviews, and the field observation agree on the positive role of media in stereotyping single women which most of them consider have a great effect on the society. Although some actresses played the role of a spinster, people usually relate spinsterhood with certain actresses acted characters that are ugly and idiot.

Main RQ-2) What are the reasons for this problem?

Participants' perception of the reasons or factors lead to spinsterhood or *onousa* is examined through question 18 (see Appendix 5.1) in the survey in addition to the docudrama, in-depth interviews and field observation. Factors that lead to spinsterhood or *onousa* are divided into personal, psychological, economic, biological, social, and religious factors. In-depth interviews and field observation are also important means to come out with these factors and their reasons.

Lack of appropriate matching between both males and females is the first reason from participants perception for personal factors, while, 'all the above' was the second choice in their ranking, and bad reputation and manners comes to be the third reason. However, an interesting finding is that woman's work comes at the end of the ranking.

In relation to the psychological factors, most of participants agree on 'all the above' as the psychological reasons, followed by 'no psychological emotional comfort between both'. Then, 'a woman failed in a love relation refusing to experience another.' This means that marriage has different psychological aspects once it is faced, put hands on, and deal with them professionally through psychologists or in some cases through psychiatrists may lead to reduce singlehood according to females.

The burden on the person who is applying to marry comes as a main reason, for most of the participants agree that the problem is an economic one as they chose 'all the above' as their first choice, followed by unemployment, then youth do not have money; however, exaggeration in dowry comes as the fourth choice. This burden affects him as he may refrain from marriage completely, and he reaches an older age by the time he is capable to solve his financial problems.

In relation to the biological factors, most of the participants agree that there is no biological reasons, which is followed by all the above reasons including the inability to get pregnant which also comes next in ranking.

In relation to the social reasons, most of the participants agree with all the above reasons, concerning 'the social low esteem view of the single woman as a spinster', 'a man leaves a girl after he spends time with her', which reduces her opportunity to find another, and 'the family and society rejects that a man may marry from them'. This indicates the importance of restoring an ethical role within the society through which a single woman is not anymore with no value, where man can easily go from one to another without any punishment, but a human being, whose rights should be respected, and no man should violate these rights. This may indicate setting limitations on men in the society to address women seriously, instead of unethically betraying many single women at the same time under the name of love. Since the

ethical law is not quite well activated in the Egyptian society; therefore, the researcher may suggest setting an actual or executive rule or law to be issued in this relevant.

Although single woman has a respected role in the main religions, Islam and Christianity, it is discovered that religion has a negative factor in the problem, where most of participants distinguish the religious factors, such as 'prohibition of any relation except marriage', with 25.5%, which comes as the first reason parallel to the choice of 'no religious reason for that', with 25.5%, followed by 'the essentiality of marriage'. What was more interesting is that 21 participants, with 6.4%, chose all the above which includes that the spinster is religiously hated, in addition to 1.5% explicitly answers she is hated from religion.

Based on results that show the participants' perception on whether the term spinster is a problem or not, 77.1% of the participants consider the term spinster as a problematic one. That is why, the researcher examined the solutions through the third main question.

Main RQ-3) What are the solutions for this problem?

Solutions suggested by participants to change the concept or the term Spinster or *Anas* in the media

To answer the third main research question of this study, how to solve this problem, some solutions are presented in question 25 in the survey. Results display the importance of both religious places and the media's role in awareness.

According to the participants' perception concerning tackling this problem in the media or not, the researcher discovered that 81.2% of the participants agree to tackle this problem in the media, and 8.7% persons respond to some extent which maintain the importance of media in helping solving developmental issues.

According to the participants' preference to tackle this problem, results show that religious programs comes on the top priority in the ranking of participants choices, followed by all the above, and movies comes as the third choice parallel with symposiums and gatherings.

Moreover, the researcher investigates the preference of elements within the message that media should focus on to improve the image of the single woman depicted as spinster, as results show the significance of 'working on solving the problem' and 'explaining and interpreting the problem'.

Based on participants' opinion concerning the role which media in general and drama (movies) in particular should play to improve the image of spinster or *anas*, solutions to improve the image of single woman. 'All the above' category comes as the first choice, followed by 'tackling the problem seriously', then 'never reduce the self esteem of the single woman' is the third choice, and the fourth is 'conducting broad media awareness campaigns. The responses show how culture and media play a crucial role that lead to that deformed perception.

Participants' Preference of the media and interpersonal communication to improve the image of spinster

Results displayed that TV and satellites are widespread public sources while the internet obtains the lowest percent. This previous awareness campaigns should be suggested and conducted more through TV and satellites due to the participants' viewership and the higher accessibility to both more than others.

Results show the important role of the family, friends, and symposiums in relation to developmental issues. Results exemplify the important role of 'family' even more than either the 'Sheikh/Priest' or the 'head of the village/family'. Depending on that, one may guess that this is the key reasons that social norms are not that easily to be changed.

6.3 Subsidiary Research Questions and hypotheses

Results obtained through chi-square and Mann Whitney statistical non-parametric statistics have demonstrated evident significant with some questions while not with others. However, according to frequencies the gender variable appears to play a role as woman are

mutely following the man's agenda in their perception of single woman depicted in the media (movies). Results show difference in relation to the image depicted of single woman (negative/positive) in movies in relation to the geographical distribution for the benefit of urban participants due to their more accessibility to the media and movies

6.4 Conclusions

Most of opinions support the significant role of religious places and family to solve the spinsterhood issue in addition to the media's role. The participants' perception of this research agrees that the single woman is a victim to the distorted depiction, with 75.9%; therefore, those who desire to change the title are 90.6%. Due to the negative connotation combined with single women in the media, most of the participants agree that the media especially movies have a significant role in confirming their perception of spinsterhood. Furthermore, actresses like Sanaa Yunis and Zenat Sedky are the ones who depict the spinster in the people's minds as if it is an image closer to the reality, especially because the Egyptian people are people that worship humor, that is why those actresses are probably closer to participants when they are asked about those who acted a spinster role.

In sum, parallel to previous studies that emphasize the problem of spinsterhood and the significant role of media in it, it is noteworthy to state that the researcher, within the context of this study, has discovered that the Egyptian society is affected by the depicted image of the spinsterhood in the media.

6.5 Limitations of the study

Because of the research inability to cover all the categories in the society, a limitation within this study is that the researcher did not study the problem in other different areas, for example Nubia and El Wahat due to the far distance to reach such places.

The difficulty to conduct a field observation in urban areas because people in urban areas have time constraints to gather like what still exist there in rural areas.

The difficulty in determining a certain meaning for the spinster is another limitation, as it differs according to different classes and cultural levels in the Egyptian society. For instance, a woman who is independent may appear as a woman with bad reputation for an upper class male, while she may be perceived as assisting in family stability for a lower class male, and vice versa with a single woman who is not blonde and may be considered as ugly by a lower class male. However, considered as the best choice for an upper class male who sees her good manners as an asset for her.

Egyptian NGOs role is neglected, as opinions of field of experts in that field should have been investigated.

Another limitation of the study is the impossibility of taking a random sample from the whole Egyptian movies because we have no true archive, and many of them are not available.

Finally, the choice of the socio-economic status on the existed three categories, less, equal average, or above, and it was better to expand and increase the categories to be acquainted with different socio-economic status within the society, for example (Less than 400 L.E.), (400 L.E. & Less than 600 L.E.), (600 L.E. & Less than 1000 L.E.), and (1000 L.E. & Above).

6.6 Recommendations of the study

Since the issue is concerning many single women in the Egyptian society according to previous percentages, the researcher addresses the civil society, religious leaders, and media women that a number of changes are needed to face this stereotyping image inherited in the Egyptians' perception.

Media literacy is playing a role; however, the civil society including the NGOs could play a role in helping to deal with such social problems to complement the role of media literacy. It is timely to start constructing a new reality of single women that is based on the truth.

This research documents the negative stereotype single women who are suffering under and calls for a new representation to be constructed. Single women have other successful roles in life, and therefore, it is better to focus on their new roles instead of labeling or stereotyping them as spinsters.

The study shows an urgent need that religious men and religious programs should play a role in eliminating the pressure on single woman to get married because if she has no opportunity that does not reduce her self-esteem. In addition, NGOs should play a real effective role as their role is not supported within the context of this study.

Drama as a mirror depicting reality should be more positive in portraying single women and delete that stereotypical desperate image of their representation to single women. Mass media, especially the TV and satellites, due to the high preference in their viewership in the Egyptian society, may contribute in solving the problem through presenting awareness programs, advice, and psychological and social support through exposing and analyzing the problem and clarify its reasons and ways to solve it. Female writers and cinema directors are recommended to write and produce movies that show single women in their correct frame even if they are in their forties or fifties to face the sarcastic agenda of male writers and drama directors to make woman always as a cheap material for laugh. In addition, single women should face this pressure from family, surroundings, and all the society, confidently.

Based on the findings of this study, the whole society needs to work to decrease the double standard that exists here between men and women. Therefore, blame the man and describe him by bad reputation, if he commits adultery because unfortunately it is considered to be a proud for a man in our society to commit adultery before marriage under the reason he is a man, but if a woman does, a hell will be opened against her. Another advice for both males and females is not to marry depending on physical appearance, but marry if you find the

suitable one who loves and respects you, do not wait to find another person who may be better. Ethically and morally speaking, keep your promises and do not betray the other partner.

Families should not impose any sort of guardianship on their daughters, while treating men with a double standard policy. Both have certain rights. A woman after being educated and joining the labor force now has certain abilities to choose and to bear the responsibility of her choice. Many single women who are victims of their family's refusal of any suitor kept yelling at their daughters why are you in rush? wait for a suitable choice. What is suitable for parents may not be suitable for daughters and vice versa.

It is timely to reconsider our application of religion because simply it is the woman's right to have a family and start her sexual life without any guardianship since this guardianship is practiced badly because as many respondents state that sex is like food and water. Now, comes the role of the state, media, and religious people to reconsider this problem and cooperate in order to eliminate any kind of discrimination against single woman who is a victim of all.

It is recommended for further study to content analyze different types of drama in relation to the topic such as theater, series for having a view of how a single woman is depicted in them. It is also important to investigate in further research the moral variable and the effects of video clips on marriage delays. Violence against single women which may be represented in rape is another important variable that is recommended for further study.

Finally, it is recommended for further study to investigate male singlehood as the society agree on the importance of marriage for both sex whether we like or not.

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Appendix 1

Survey

Please Participate in this questionnaire. It is designed only for research and academic purposes for obtaining a Master Thesis' Degree. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Your participation is important and will add to this thesis for the development of the country.

1. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. **Geographical Distribution:** ☐ Urban ☐ Rural
3. **Religion:** ☐ Islam ☐ Christianity
4. **Age:** ☐ Less than 20 ☐ 20 and Less than 30 ☐ 30 and Less than 40 ☐ 40 and Above
5. **Marital status:** ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed
6. **Educational Level:**
☐ No Education ☐ Can Read and Write ☐ Basic Education
☐ High School/ Equivalent/or Higher school ☐ University Certificate ☐ Graduate Degree
7. **Occupation Status:** ☐ Working ☐ Not Working (if you are working please answer the following question no. (8) and do not answer question (9), and if you are not working Please do not answer question no. (8) and go to question no. (9)).
8. **Working:** ☐ Governmental Sector ☐ Private Sector ☐ Self Employed ☐ Craftsman
9. **Not Working because:** ☐ Retired ☐ No Job Opportunity ☐ Student ☐ Housewife ☐ Other
10. **Economic Status:** ☐ Less than 400 L.E. ☐ 400 L.E and Less than 500. ☐ Above 500 L.E.
11. **From your Point of View What does the word Spinster or *Anas* mean?**
☐ A Woman past age and not married ☐ A Woman that train of Marriage left her ☐ Any girl not married after puberty
☐ A Woman with no marriage opportunities ☐ An Ugly Woman either in Appearance or behavior ☐ A woman with Bad Reputation ☐ All the Above ☐ Other.....
12. **Do you think there is another term better for use instead of the word Spinster or *Anas*?** (if the answer is (Yes) please answer the following question no. (13), if your answer is (No) please go to question no. (14).
☐ Yes ☐ No
13. **What is the term which you see suitable and better than the term Spinster or *Anas*?**
☐ Miss ☐ Unmarried ☐ Other.....
14. **What is the age when a woman takes the title Spinster or *Anas*?**
☐ 20 and Less than 25 ☐ 25 and Less than 30 ☐ 30 and Less than 35
☐ 35 and Less than 40 ☐ 40 and Less than 45 ☐ 45 and Less than 50
☐ 50 and Above ☐ None ☐ Other
15. **The term Spinster or *Anas* affects single woman psychologically**
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
16. **The term Spinster or *Anas* affects woman socially**
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
17. **The term Spinster or *Anas* reduces the self esteem of the woman socially**
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

18. What are the factors that lead to the Spinsterhood or Onousa problem? Is it:

A- Personal Factors:

- ☐ Men do not want to marry ☐ Girls do not want to marry ☐ the lack of appropriate matching between males and females ☐ Woman's work ☐ Ugly Appearance/ behavior
☐ Bad manners and Reputation of Girls ☐ All the Above
☐ No Reason ☐ Other.....

B- Psychological Factors:

- ☐ A woman not married because of her loyalty to her lover ☐ A woman failed in a love relation refusing to experience another
☐ No Psychological emotional comfort between both ☐ The fear from handling marriage responsibilities ☐ All the Above ☐ Other.....

C- Economic Factors:

- ☐ Youth do not have money to marry ☐ Exaggeration in Dowry ☐ Unemployment
☐ All the Above ☐ No Reason ☐ Other.....

D- Biological Factors:

- ☐ The Inability to get pregnant ☐ Giving birth to a Mongolian/Disabled Child ☐ Difficulty in having Sexual Intercourse ☐ The First & The Second ☐ All the Above ☐ No Reason ☐ Other.....

E- Social Factors:

- ☐ The Family rejects the son to marry from them ☐ The man rejects to marry from them ☐ The Society rejects the man to marry from them
☐ The Social Low Esteem view of the spinster or *Anas* ☐ A man leaves a girl after he spent a time with her (either as a fiancé or a relation) ☐ All the Above ☐ No Reason ☐ Other.....

F- Religious Factors: (Please Answer taking your religion into consideration)

- ☐ Prohibition of Mixing ☐ Prohibition of any relation except marriage ☐ Essentiality of Marriage ☐ The Spinster or *Anas* is religiously hated ☐ All the Above ☐ No Reason ☐ Other.....

19. Do you think that the religious places (Mosque/Church) play an awareness role in solving the Spinsterhood (*Onousa*) problem?

- ☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

20. Do you think that the NGOs play an awareness role in solving the Spinsterhood (*Onousa*) problem?

- ☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

21. The single woman titled as spinster or *Anas* is a criminal

- ☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

22. The single woman titled as spinster or *Anas* is a victim to this image

- ☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

23. Suggestion to change the term spinster or *Anas*

- ☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

24. From your point of view, do you consider the term spinster or *Anas* as a problem?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ To Some Extent (if the answer is (Yes) or

(To Some Extent) please answer the following question no. (25), if you answer (No) go to question no. (26).

25. What are the solutions which you suggest to change the concept or the term spinster or *Anas*?

- ☐ Religious places should play a more effective role ☐ NGOs should play a more effective role ☐ Media should play a role in Awareness ☐ Advise men to marry from those who fit their age ☐ The state should grant who marry incentives ☐ A girl who is past age should not be accused as a criminal ☐ All the Above ☐ Other.....

26. Please describe the Image of Woman titled as Spinster or *Anas* in the Egyptian Media especially Drama (Movies) : (please check the box that best fits your answer taking into consideration the degree, that is as long as your answer becomes nearer to No. (1) the answer will be negative, as long as it becomes nearer to No. (5) the answer will be positive, and No. (3) will be Neutral).

	5	4	3	2	1	
Positive						Negative
Beautiful						Ugly
Objective						Unobjective
Credible						Incredible
Lovable						Unlovable
Serious						Sarcastic
Realistic						Unrealistic

27. Did the Media in general and Drama (Movies) in particular play a role in confirming and ensuring the image of spinster or *Anas* in the Society?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

28. From your point of view, should we tackle this problem in the media?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ To Some Extent (if the answer is (Yes) or (To Some Extent) please answer the following questions, if your answer is (No) Thank you and please stop here and do not answer the rest of questions)

29. Preference to tackle this problem through: (you can choose more than one answer, and in this case please arrange them according to your priority by adding numbers before every answer in which no. (1) will be the top priority, and what follows will be the less)

☐ Health Programs ☐ Religious Programs ☐ Movies ☐ Series ☐ Plays ☐ Ads and Guiding Commercials
☐ Investigative Reports ☐ Symposiums and Gatherings ☐ All the Above ☐ Other.....

30. What are the elements within the Message of the Media that one should focus on to improve the image of Spinster or *Anas* Woman?

☐ Explaining and Interpreting the Problem ☐ Investigating the Problem ☐ Giving Advice to the Problem ☐ Setting Solutions to the Problem ☐ Working on Solving the Problem ☐ All the Above ☐ Other.....

31. What is the role that the media in general and the drama (movies) in particular should play to improve the image of Spinster or *Anas* Woman?

☐ Conducting Broad Media Awareness Campaigns ☐ Tackling the problem seriously ☐ Never representing her in a sarcastic way ☐ Never reducing her self esteem ☐ Representing her as more aware and able to handle responsibilities ☐ All the Above ☐ Other..... **32.**

32. Which medium should we focus on to improve the image of Spinster or *Anas* Woman?

(you can choose more than one answer, and in this case please arrange them according to your priority by adding numbers before every answer in which no. (1) will be the top priority, and what follows will be the less)

☐ Television ☐ Radio ☐ Papers ☐ Internet ☐ Satellites ☐ All the Above

33. What is the more preferable interpersonal communication that we should focus on to improve the image of Spinster or *Anas* Woman? : (you can choose more than one answer, and in this case please arrange them according to your priority by adding numbers before every answer in which no. (1) will be the top priority, and what follows will be the less)

☐ Family ☐ Friends ☐ Both ☐ Head of the Village/Family
☐ Sheikh/Priest ☐ Symposiums ☐ All the Above

34. Please check the box in front of the actress whom you know and whom you know that she acted a Spinster or Anas role in any movie either as a major or a minor character, and whom you know that she did not.

Number	The Actress Name	Do you know this Actress? Please Check the box if you know her	If you know that this actress acted as a spinster please check the left box, if she did not check the right box	
			Acted as Spinster (<i>Anas</i>)	Did not Act as Spinster
1	Soad Hosni			
2	Zenat Sedky			
3	Malek EL Gamal			
4	Soheer El Baroony			
5	Soheer El Morshedy			
6	Yusra			
7	Mevat Amin			
8	Khairia Ahmed			
9	Zezy El Badrawy			
10	Mary Monib			
11	Nabila El Sayed			
12	Sanaa Gamil			
13	Nagma Ibrahim			
14	Aziza Helmi			
15	Laila Fawzy			
16	Hala Fakher			
17	Bosi			
18	Faten Hamama			
19	Lola Sedky			
20	Akeela Rateb			
21	Esaad Yunis			
22	Nadia El Nokrashy			
23	Dawlat Bayomi			
24	Sanaa Yunis			
25	Shadia			

Please Restore Your right to express your opinion and do not leave any question. Thank you for your time and cooperation ☺

Appendix 2

استمارة استبيان

برجاء مشاركتكم فى الإجابة على أسئلة هذا الاستبيان علماً بأنه مصمم لخدمة البحث الدراسى ولإعداد رسالة ماجستير. وعلماً بأن المعلومات ستكون سرية وغير مسموح بالإطلاع عليها من أى جهة. مشاركتكم سيكون لها أثر كبير وستكون أساسية لاستكمال هذه الرسالة وإنجاحها.

1. النوع: ☐ ذكر ☐ أنثى
2. التوزيع الجغرافى ☐ حضر ☐ ريف
3. الدين: ☐ الإسلام ☐ المسيحية
4. السن ☐ أقل من 20 ☐ 20 سنة فأقل من 30 ☐ 30 سنة فأقل من 40 ☐ 40 سنة فما فوق
5. الحالة الاجتماعية ☐ أعزب/أنسة ☐ متزوج/متزوجة ☐ مطلق/مطلقة ☐ أرمل/أرملة
6. الحالة التعليمية:
- ☐ غير متعلم (غير متعلمة) ☐ يقرأ ويكتب/تقرأ وتكتب ☐ تعليم أساسى
- ☐ ثانوية عامة/دبلوم متوسط/فوق متوسط ☐ شهادة جامعية ☐ دراسات عليا
7. الحالة الوظيفية: ☐ أعمل ☐ لا أعمل (فى حالة إذا كنت تعمل برجاء الإجابة على السؤال التالى رقم (8) وعدم الإجابة على سؤال رقم (9) / أما إذا كنت لا تعمل فبرجاء ترك سؤال رقم (8) والانتقال الى السؤال الذى يليه رقم (9))
8. أعمل: ☐ موظف(ة) حكومية ☐ موظف(ة) قطاع خاص ☐ أعمال حرة ☐ أعمال حرفية
9. لا أعمل لأنى: ☐ بالمعاش ☐ لم أجد فرصة عمل ☐ طالب/طالبة ☐ ربة منزل ☐ أخرى.....
10. الحالة المادية ☐ أقل من 400 جنى ☐ 400 جنى بالضبط ☐ أكثر من 400 جنى
11. من وجهة نظرك ماذا تعنى كلمة "عانس"؟
- ☐ المرأة التى تجاوزت السن ولم تتزوج ☐ المرأة التى فاتها قطار الزواج ☐ أى فتاة لم تتزوج بعد بلوغها
- ☐ المرأة التى ليس لديها فرص فى الزواج ☐ المرأة الدميعة أو ذات المظهر/أو السلوك القبيح
- ☐ المرأة سيئة السلوك والسمعة ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
12. هل تعتقد أن هناك مصطلح أفضل للاستخدام بدلا من مصطلح عانس؟ (إذا كانت الإجابة (نعم) برجاء الإجابة على السؤال التالى رقم (13) أما إذا كانت الإجابة (لا) انتقل إلى سؤال رقم (14))
- ☐ نعم ☐ لا
13. ما هو المصطلح الذى ترى انه مناسب أو أفضل من مصطلح عانس؟
- ☐ أنسة ☐ غير متزوجة ☐ أخرى.....
14. ما هو السن الذى تأخذ فيه المرأة لقب عانس؟
- ☐ 20 سنة فأقل من 25 سنة ☐ 25 سنة فأقل من 30 ☐ 30 سنة فأقل من 35 سنة
- ☐ 35 سنة فأقل من 40 سنة ☐ 40 سنة فأقل من 45 سنة ☐ 45 سنة فأقل من 50 سنة
- ☐ 50 سنة فما فوق ☐ لا يوجد ☐ أخرى.....
15. لفظ عانس يؤثر على المرأة نفسيا.
- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
16. لفظ عانس يؤثر على المرأة اجتماعي ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
17. لفظ عانس يقلل من شأن المرأة اجتماعي ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
18. ما هى العوامل المؤدية للعنوسة؟ هل هى:
- أ- عوامل شخصية:
- ☐ الرجال لا يريدون الزواج ☐ البنات لا تردن الزواج ☐ عدم التناسب بين الطرفين ☐ عمل المرأة ☐ دمامة المظهر و/أو السلوك
- ☐ سوء سلوك البنات ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ لا توجد أسباب ☐ أخرى.....
- ب- عوامل نفسية:
- ☐ امرأة لم تتزوج لإخلاصها لحبيبها ☐ امرأة فشلت فى علاقة عاطفية فترفض الدخول فى تجربة جديدة
- ☐ عدم الراحة النفسية بين الطرفين ☐ الخوف من تحمل المسؤولية ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
- ج- عوامل اقتصادية:
- ☐ ليس مع الشباب مال للزواج ☐ المغالاة فى المهور ☐ البطالة
- ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ لا توجد أسباب ☐ أخرى.....
- د- عوامل بيولوجية:
- ☐ عدم القدرة على الانجاب ☐ انجاب طفل مغولى/معاق ☐ صعوبة الممارسة الجنسية
- ☐ الاول والثانى ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ لا توجد أسباب ☐ أخرى.....
- هـ- عوامل اجتماعية:
- ☐ رفض الاسرة زواج ابنها منهن ☐ رفض الشباب الزواج منهن ☐ رفض المجتمع الزواج منهن
- ☐ النظرة المجتمعية الدونية للعانس ☐ ترك الشباب للفتاة بعد قضائه فترة معها (سواء خطيب أو علاقة)
- ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ لا توجد أسباب ☐ أخرى.....
- م- عوامل دينية: (برجاء إبداء الرأي مع الأخذ فى الاعتبار لديانتك)
- ☐ تحريم الخلط بين الجنسين ☐ تحريم أى علاقة بين الجنسين غير الزواج ☐ الزواج لابد منه
- ☐ العانس مكروهة دينيا ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ لا توجد أسباب ☐ أخرى.....
- ى- عوامل أخرى: ولماذا؟.....

- 19 هل تعتقد أن دور العبادة (الجامع أو الكنيسة) تقوم بدور في التوعية من أجل حل تلك المشكلة؟
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 20 هل تعتقد أن مؤسسات المجتمع المدني تقوم بدور في التوعية من أجل حل تلك المشكلة؟
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 21 المرأة غير المتزوجة الملقبة بالعانس متهمه أو جانية.
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 22 المرأة غير المتزوجة الملقبة بالعانس ضحية لهذه الصورة.
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 23 نقترح ضرورة تغيير مصطلح العانس.
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 24 هل يعد لقب عانس مشكلة من وجهة نظرك؟ ☐ نعم ☐ لا ☐ إلى حد ما (إذا كانت الإجابة (نعم) أو (إلى حد ما) فبرجاء إجابة السؤال رقم (25) أما إذا كانت الإجابة (لا) فانتقل إلى سؤال رقم (26)
- 25 ما هي الحلول التي تقترحها/تقترحها لتغيير هذا المفهوم أو مصطلح العانس؟
☐ أن تقوم دور العبادة بدور أكثر فاعلية ☐ أن تقوم الجمعيات الأهلية بدور أكثر فاعلية
☐ أن يلعب الإعلام دوراً في التوعية ☐ حث الشباب على الزواج ممن تناسبهم سناً
☐ تحفيز الدولة للشباب بالزواج منهن ☐ عدم تجريم الفتاة التي تجاوزت السن
☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
- 26 صورة المرأة العانس في الاعلام والدراما (الأفلام) المصرية: (علم بعلامة صح في أي درجة تراها مناسبة في كل من الإجابات التالية علماً بأنه كلما اقتربت إجابتك من رقم (1) كلما كانت الإجابة سلبية وكلما اقتربت من رقم (5) كلما كانت الإجابة إيجابية)

	1	2	3	4	5	
إيجابية						غير إيجابية
جميلة						قبيحة
موضوعية						غير موضوعية
تتسم بالمصداقية						خالية من المصداقية
محبوبة						غير محبوبة
جدية						ساخرة
واقعية						غير واقعية

- 27 هل لعب الإعلام عموماً والدراما (الأفلام) خصوصاً دوراً في تدعيم وتأكيد صورة العانس في المجتمع؟
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ حيادي ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق أبداً
- 28 هل ينبغي طرح تلك المشكلة اعلامياً؟
☐ نعم ☐ لا ☐ إلى حد ما (إذا كانت الإجابة (نعم) أو (إلى حد ما) فبرجاء إجابة الاسئلة التالية، أما إذا كانت الإجابة (لا) فشكراً، ومن فضلك توقف عن الإجابة على بقية الاسئلة)
- 29 أفضلية تناول تلك المشكلة عن طريق: (يمكن الإجابة على أكثر من إجابة وفي هذه الحالة رتب حسب الأولوية بوضع أرقام قبل كل إجابة بحيث يكون رقم (1) الأكثر أولوية وما يليه الأقل أولوية)
☐ البرامج الصحية ☐ البرامج الدينية ☐ الأفلام ☐ المسلسلات ☐ المسرحيات
☐ الإعلانات والإرشادات ☐ التحقيقات الصحفية ☐ الندوات واللقاءات ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
- 30 ما هي عناصر الرسالة الاعلامية الذي يتعين التركيز عليها من أجل تحسين صورة العانس؟
☐ شرح وتفسير المشكلة ☐ البحث والتنقيب في المشكلة ☐ اعطاء نصائح للمشكلة
☐ وضع حلول للمشكلة ☐ العمل على حل المشكلة ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
- 31 ما هو الدور الذي يتعين على الإعلام عموماً والدراما خصوصاً القيام به من أجل تحسين صورة العانس؟
☐ القيام بحملات توعية اعلامية واسعة ☐ تناول الموضوع بصورة جدية ☐ عدم إظهارها بصورة ساخرة
☐ عدم التقليل من شأنها ☐ إظهارها أكثر وعياً وتحملًا للمسئولية ☐ كل ما سبق ☐ أخرى.....
- 32 ما هي الوسيلة الاعلامية الذي يتعين التركيز عليها من أجل تحسين صورة العانس؟ (يمكن الإجابة على أكثر من إجابة وفي هذه الحالة رتب حسب الأولوية بوضع أرقام قبل كل إجابة بحيث يكون رقم (1) الأكثر أولوية وما يليه الأقل أولوية)
☐ التلفزيون ☐ الإذاعة ☐ الصحف ☐ الانترنت ☐ الفضائيات ☐ كل ما سبق
- 33 ما هي أفضل وسائل الاتصال المباشر الذي يتعين التركيز عليها من أجل تحسين صورة العانس؟ (يمكن الإجابة على أكثر من إجابة وفي هذه الحالة رتب حسب الأولوية بوضع أرقام قبل كل إجابة بحيث يكون رقم (1) الأكثر أولوية وما يليه الأقل أولوية)
☐ الأهل ☐ الأصدقاء ☐ الاثنان معا ☐ العمدة أو كبير العائلة ☐ الشيخ /القس ☐ الندوات ☐ كل ما سبق

34 برجاء وضع علامة صح أمام أسم الممثلة التي تعرفها وتعرف أنها قامت بدور عانس أو لم تقم بدور عانس في السينما المصرية

الرقم	أسم الممثلة	هل تعرف هذه الممثلة؟ برجاء وضع علامة صح في أسفل على أسم الممثلة التي تعرفها	في حالة إذا كنت تعرف الممثلة برجاء وضع علامة (صح) أمام أسم الممثلة التي قامت بدور عانس في الخانة الخاصة بها وعلامة (صح) أمام أسم الممثلة التي لم تقم بدور عانس في الخانة الخاصة بها في أسفل	
			عانس	غير عانس
1	سعاد حسنى			
2	زينات صدقى			
3	ملك الجمل			
4	سهير البارونى			
5	سهير المرشدى			
6	يسرا			
7	مرفت أمين			
8	خيرية أحمد			
9	زيزى البدرأوى			
10	مارى منيب			
11	نبيلة السيد			
12	سناء جميل			
13	نجمة ابراهيم			
14	عزیزة حلمى			
15	ليلى فوزى			
16	هالة فاخر			
17	بوسى			
18	فاتن حمامة			
19	لولا صدقى			
20	عقيلة راتب			
21	اسعاد يونس			
22	نادية النقراشى			
23	دولت بيومى			
24	سناء يونس			
25	شادية			

برجاء حفظ حقتك في التعبير عن رأيك بعدم ترك أى سؤال دون إجابة مع خالص الشكر والامتنان على تعاونكم ,,,,(٩)

Appendix 3

3.1 Code Book:

Medium: Cinema

Unit of analysis: the movie

Movie#	Movie	Movie
1. <i>Abn Hamido</i>	19. Had EL Seif	38. Fatma We Marika We Rashil
2. <i>Abu Halmos</i>	20. Bedour	39. <i>Matlob Armala A</i> Widow is requested
3. <i>Akhwatoh El Banat</i>	21. El Raayi Wel Nesaa	40. Hekhayet Talat Banat
4. <i>Al Shemoua El Sawdaa 'The Black Candles'</i>	22. Raghba Motawahesha	41. Khaltabita
5. <i>Esmail Yassen Fe Mostashfa El Maganin Esmail Yassin in the Mental Asylum</i>	23. El Zamar	42. Fel Seif EL Hob Genoon
6. <i>Ayamna El Helwa</i>	24. El Mazloma	43. Ya Donia Ya Gharamy
7. <i>Ayn Omry</i>	25. Lelet El Dokhla	44. Afareet EL Asfalt
8. <i>Bedayia We Nehayia</i>	26. Mamlaket El Nesaa	45. Hysteria
9. <i>Ahl El Qema</i>	27. Zoga Leyoum Wahed	46. EL Nazer
10. <i>Antabiho Ayha El Sada</i>	28. Shara El Hob	47. El Labees
11. <i>El Bahas An Fediha</i>	29. <i>Khabar Abiad</i> White News	48. Rehlet Hob "A love Trip"
12. <i>Om Ratiba</i>	30. Leylet El Kabd Ala Bakisa We Zaghlo	49. Farah
13. <i>Ben El Khasreen</i>	31. Leylet El Kabd Ala Fatma	50. Yana Ya Khalti
14. <i>Ben Eidek</i>	32. El Maraya	51. Belia We Dmagho EL Alya
15. <i>Tamr Hena</i>	33. El Zarif Wel Shahm Wel Tamaa	52. El Khatib Rakam 13
16. <i>Talatah Losos</i>	34. Adwaa El Madina	53. Aghla Men Hayati
17. <i>Talat Warisat</i>	35. Hareb Men El Zawag	54. Raghabat Mamnooa
18. <i>Hoby Fe El Kahira</i> My Love in Cairo	36. Yasmin	
	37. Yom Helw We Yom Mor	

Date:

Year	Year	Year	Year
1. 1933	11. 1960	21. 1973	31. 1991
2. 1947	12. 1962	22. 1974	32. 1994
3. 1949	13. 1963	23. 1976	33. 1995
4. 1950	14. 1964	24. 1979	34. 1996
5. 1951	15. 1965	25. 1980	35. 1998
6. 1955	16. 1966	26. 1981	36. 2000
7. 1956	17. 1968	27. 1984	37. 2001
8. 1957	18. 1970	28. 1986	38. 2004
9. 1958	19. 1971	29. 1988	39. 2005
10. 1959	20. 1972	30. 1990	

Type:

1. Comedy
2. Tragedy

Direction:

1. Negative
2. Positive
3. Negative/Positive

Role:

1. Major
2. Minor
3. Both

Appendix 3.2

Coding Form: The Role of Egyptian Film in Stereotyping Single Women

A content analysis study

MOVIE#	DATE	MEDIUM	TYPE	DIRECTION	ROLE	TOPIC
1	8	1	1	1	2	The old <i>anas</i> sister who appeared ugly, unattractive, and in an unacceptable way wanted to get married.
2	2	1	1	1	2	The <i>anas</i> aunt in the film sister who appeared ugly, unattractive and in an unacceptable way wanted to get married.
3	23	1	1	3	2	The oldest sister who appeared ugly, unattractive, and in an unacceptable way wanted to get married, and her brother refusing.
4	12	1	2	1	2	A woman who is known as an unmarried although she secretly married one of the brothers she was serving; she was behaving in a strange way and jealous of the major character and she killed her husband to revenge from him because he wants to have sex with the major character. No one knew that she was married except at the end when they entered her room and discovered the truth.
5	9	1	1	1	2	Acting as awanes women visiting the foreteller to ask him about the expected husband. They acted in a negative desperate way by seeking the help of the foreteller
6	6	1	2	1	2	The <i>anas</i> bad woman who wants to kill Faten Hamama because she is jealous from her beauty.
7	7	1	2	3	2	Two sisters in laws not married and envying the young bride, and their brother is the reason
8	11	1	2	1	2	A <i>anas</i> turned to be a prostitute as the society was pressuring her to get married and she committed suicide at the end
9	26	1	2	2	1	She did not marry because of her uncle's bad economic circumstance.
10	25	1	2	2	2	A <i>anas</i> she and her family father and brother refused to make her marry the garbage carrier to restore the values. The story ended by this garbage carrier marrying her brother's fiancée who left her finance to marry this guy to live in good economic circumstances while the sister of her ex fiancé stayed <i>anas</i> .
11	21	1	1	1	2	One of the famous <i>anas</i> characters in the Egyptian movies and her famous words a groom mum "arees ya Amayaa", and her father forced a man to marry her under the gun threat.
12	10	1	1	3	2	A sister who is ugly and whose brother refuse to make her marry.
13	14	1	2	1	2	A very ugly woman who difficultly married
14	11	1	1	3	2	Her sister did not want her to marry, and she is ugly and acts in an unacceptable way.

(Appendix 3.2 Continues)

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15	8	1	1	1	2	The <i>anas</i> aunt who is ugly, and wants to marry.
16	16	1	2	1	2	The <i>anas</i> aunt who he tried to steal but she was the reason to put him in jail.
17	11	1	2	1	2	The oldest sister was <i>anas</i> , and she was desperate
18	16	1	2	2	2	She loved someone and he was dead and she did not marry to be honest in her love
19	28	1	2	3	2	She was ugly, and a daughter of a father Mahmoud Morsi who doesn't have enough money to make her marry and one he got the money she got married
20	22	1	2	1	2	The <i>anas</i> who is in love with the actor Magdi Wahba, and tries to make him hate the one whom he loves and she talked behind her back.
21	31	1	2	2	1	The <i>anas</i> woman who did not marry because there is no one around
22	30	1	3	2	1	The Anas who did not marry because there no one around and she is shaving her face like men.
23	27	1	3	2	1	She was psycho and her brother was very bad and no one wanted to marry her.
24	4	1	2	2	1	She committed adultery and got a child and give it to her sister because the society will refuse her and her child if they know it is illegitimate
25	4	1	1	1	2	Two ugly women who did not have any opportunity of marriage, and when two grooms came to marry their neighbors, they will marry them by mistake, and then they threw themselves from the window when they discovered how ugly they are
26	6	1	1	1	3	A group of woman lived in a place alone without men and their queen, physician, and many are ugly, and when they discovered the presence of a man on their land they got crazy and everyone starting from the queen wants to take and marry him.
27	13	1	2	2	2	A man who has 4 girls one married and the other no and she was the oldest
28	9	1	1	1	2	Anas who raised chicks in her head's hat and act strangely.
29	5	1	1	1	2	She appears as a crazy ugly manners who wants to marry and keen for that.

(Appendix 3.2 Continues)

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31	27	1	2	2	1	She stayed unmarried to care for her brothers
32	18	1	3	2	1	She and her mum refuse marriage until no one married her.
33	19	1	1	1	2	She is his cousin and she is very fat, and his family are forcing him to marry her. He escaped to Alexandria and there he loved another one.
34	20	1	1	1	2	<i>Anas</i> who looked ugly and run after the fiancé.
35	14	1	1	1	2	He went to marry a girl and he find her ugly <i>anas</i> cousin instead.
36	4	1	1	1	2	Ugly <i>anas</i> who is keen to marry.
37	29	1	2	2	2	The oldest girl and her mother was forced to make her marry with her to get her marry
38	3	1	1	1	2	He went to marry a girl and he find her ugly <i>Anas</i> cousin instead.
39	16	1	1	1	2	She is an old women with bad looking appearance and she is working as a servant. He wants to marry her because he thought she is a widow because he should marry a widow as a condition to inherit his uncle but he knew she is not married so he quits.
40	17	1	1	2	2	She thought that her neighbor in the window loved her but at the end discovered that she was imagining that.
41	32	1	1	1	2	She was planning to marry the hero.
42	33	1	3	2	1	She loved her lover and she do not want to marry but she was suffering from psychological effects.
43	34	1	3	2	1	Three major characters are friends and are looking forward to get married before getting past age.
44	34	1	3	2	1	Her brother refused that she can marry a driver and she suffered from bad psychological consequences because she was scared that train of marriage may leave her.
45	35	1	1	1	2	She is working in a shop selling birds and she loved him so she started to follow him.
46	36	1	1	1	2	She is an English teacher talking and acting in a manly way.
47	37	1	1	1	2	She is following the character and wants to marry him doing whatever she can in such a humorous way and she can enter his room from the window.
48	37	1	1	1	2	A fat woman working as a teacher at school with bad looking and appearance.
49	38	1	1	1	2	She is the principle of an orphanage, and she is single-still unmarried; however, she is very fat and ugly and doing abnormal signs with her face and mouth while watching a romantic movie, and trying to sexually harass the hero of the movie when he come to take the kid to live with him. She wants him to commit adultery with her, and he runs escaping from her.

(Appendix 3.2 Continues)

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50	39	1	1	1	2	She is an officer in the prison, and when a woman who the actor acting as a female magician enters prison, and she did whatever the magician asks even she helped her to escape from prison thinking that she will get her a groom.
51	36	1	1	1	2	She is a teacher exceeding the age of marriage, and she is advertising herself in newspaper for someone to marry her. No one who is suitable asks to marry her only a plumber. At the end an old married mechanic agrees to marry her from her neighborhood.
52	1	1	2	2	2	She is beautiful but in the film she is very ugly, and the film tackle the onousa issue because of being ugly
53	15	1	2	2	1	The woman who loved her lover so much and did not marry waiting for him, and when they met she sacrificed herself as she asked him to make their marriage in secret and to marry Urfi marriage to save his family, and she kept until the end everyone think she is unmarried
54	24	1	2	2	1	She was practicing sex with her father

Appendix 4:

In-depth Interviews & List of Contact of Interviewees

4.1 In-depth Interviews

4.1.1 Psychology Experts

Nashae N. Said, a psychiatrist (Personal Communication, February 18th, 2007), indicates the importance of marriage for persons and especially woman psychologically, he states that "marriage is important due to its advantages, and they are: satisfaction of sexual needs which is usually can be satisfied through marriage in our culture, formation of a family and having children, security needs, i.e. finding someone to take care for (of) his partner". He also adds that major psychologists viewed the importance of marriage such as Erik Erickson who stated that the major social task or target for persons aging from 20 to 40 is to find intimate relationship with the opposite sex and eventually, the formation of a family and by that he or she can feel secure and avoid loneliness. So as long as the man or woman gets older and failing to achieve that social goals lead him or her to a sense of failure, loss, despair, loneliness, and isolation.

According to the single woman labeled as spinster or *anas*, Said states that she is more to suffer from psychological depression, frustration, and low self esteem; moreover, as long as she gets older, suffering from such psychological diseases increases, as she sees her friends and colleagues are getting married; however, she did not succeed in forming a family until this age. According to Said's opinion, *onousa* may start from the age of 30. She may be viewed as a complicated, psychological destroyed and less than her colleagues; a depreciating view, which the media, through drama, cultivate and enhance. "Our oriental societies look for the spinster with much stigma as a disability or great disadvantage. In Egypt, now, there is more than 4 and half million spinsters, and a spinster is the woman who passed the age of 30 and never been proposed to by a man. This age increases from the past two decades, where woman labeled as spinster in the twentieth of her age. Many laymen and average middle class look for a spinster with lots of suspicions as queer or complicated or having a deformity just for one reason that she did not marry. That look to the spinster might be less stigmatized in higher social class who has more liberal and open-minded look for life in general. As in Western societies, being a spinster is a life style; anyone can choose to live with. So, I think there is no stigma about being not married until a certain age" (Said).

Asking about if he has some cases like that, he answered that there was a 35-years old nurse working with him in the hospital, and the staff kept laughing of her and consider her *anas*, so she quit.

Second case, a 35-years old female physician who visited him, and she was suffering from psychological depression. Said thinks that the reasons behind that are she is either not married or not involved in a love relationship.

The third case was a 32-years old female employee dedicated herself for science, and forgot to marry; years passed, and she found herself alone. So she involved in friendship relations with unsuitable persons for the sake of love. He interpreted this case that she refuses the traditional marriage, and wants to have a romantic love story with a person who loves and appreciates her. That case suffers sometimes from temporary depression; then, she continues her focus on her main interest, which is science and/or knowledge.

4.1.2 Religious Men

Sheikh Ali Hafez, Imam of Fatma El Zahraa Mosque (Personal Communication, May 15, 2007) states that most of the Egyptian families exaggerate in their requirements from the groom in addition to putting many conditions to be fulfilled from a groom which Islamically speaking is not accepted. He states that the choice in Islam does not depend on money or appearance, but depends instead on religion, morals, and behavior. He points out that single woman is not rejected, but respected in Islam, as Virgin Mary herself was single. He refers to many verses that mention that women should keep themselves chaste and restore her dignity, until Allah enriches them. However, he blames the cultural heritage and the media, which label women as spinsters and distort their image. Hafez also blames the false cultural concepts that a woman after certain age will not give birth to children as he gave many examples for many Prophets and their wives who gave birth to children in older ages. He asserts that the mosque plays its role in awareness of the importance of marriage, but this is not enough as the media should play their role instead of stereotyping single women as spinsters.

In an interview with Bishop Joseph Sarraf, Bishop of the Chaldeans in Egypt (Personal Interview, March 12th, 2007), he stresses on the dignity of woman. He states that every woman in the society should have her own personality, and she should not go with the flow that characterizes or label her as *anas*. He sees that if the society looks that look to the woman, then this society will be suffering from vacuum. About his opinion about the term spinster or *anas* which the society always labels unmarried woman with, he says that this word should be absolutely deleted, and never to be used. He says there is nothing called *onousa*. He points out that the media, which always help in forming the public opinion, should help in deleting that term completely because which will be better? To be unmarried, or to be a divorcee/a widow. "If a woman did not choose well, she may either marry a person who does not suit her or is older than her to satisfy the society, and by that we will not call her *anas*, but a poor young widow", he states. People should not interfere in others' life. Bishop Sarraf says that "the girl should never think of herself as a victim. She should be a strong one. So if she finds a suitable one, I encourage her to marry, if she did not, it doesn't matter. In our minds, a woman should marry; if she did not then it is a problem. Then even after she got married, if she did not give birth to a child and specially a boy, that will be another problem, and she may be divorced. All these are African traditions. There is no such a thing in the Christian marriage, as woman should protect her dignity. She should not say that the train has left her. The society will view her like that because that is the mentality of the society. However, the most important is the role of the woman to change these concepts. The society always criticizes; however, there is no religion in the world that forces woman to marry or enforce marriage as obligatory. He adds that the age of marriage has increased due to the social and cultural progress.

According to his opinion, the whole society must cooperate and play a role to solve that problem. It is not only the role of the church. The role starts from the home, the family, a connected family will differ from a separated one. He also states that the role of the media is very important, as they help in forming the public opinion. The media should be a productive one that should construct and remedy. In the past, movies were tackling many issues; however, nowadays, the situation is different. He suggests that producing a movie that criticizes these contradictions in our society in such a sarcastic way may make people think, "Why do we act like that". According to the role of the church, Bishop Sarraf confirms the important role played by the church through organizing family trips which allow people to see and know each other. And also through seminars. All these may be useful in matchmaking. He adds that the main goal of marriage is that "we help each other", but most marriages depends mainly on appearance and economic status, and this may be the main reason for *onousa*. He considers that financial affairs have great effect. He states that Egyptian males' mentality used to think to

marry younger women to help or serve them when they get older, and for sure that is not the purpose of marriage.

In an interview with Priest Yonan Samir Wengt, an Orthodox Priest, he stresses on the importance of the family as an institution created by Allah. Spinsterhood as a phenomenon starts to increase recently due to various factors: economic factors, as the costs of marriage are very high, and cultural ones, as woman in the past never saw her groom except in her wedding day, but now she is the one who choose especially after she has obtained a good level of education, and she can not accept easily any person. Priest Yonan adds that the society and the media contribute in enhancing that a person should marry with certain abilities: expensive furnished flat, and other kinds of appearance aspects which lead the girls and their families to require from the groom exaggerated requirements which he can not afford. He states that the society and the media start to marketize the spinsterhood issue as a material for laugh, and start to tackle it in a comic frame through the drama: movies, series, and plays. The media are active participants in that as they depict the single woman in a comic ugly image. The media instead should tackle the issue and try to examine the reasons objectively. He asserts that the church plays its role through awareness programs for the youth. He also emphasizes that the Christian girl is like the Muslim one both of them are suffering from the same problem due to the perception of the society to the single woman as a spinster. This perception leads the girl to give many concessions through accepting an unsuitable marriage, either socially, educationally, or culturally, which leads to her suffocation later on.

4.1.3 Media Experts

4.1.3.1 Official Media Speaker

In an interview with H.E. Ambassador Ayman EL Kafas, the Chairman of the State Information Service (Personal Interview, April 29th, 2007), he asserts that the word spinster (*anas*) or the situation itself affects the woman negatively because the word means to describe that the woman has certain deficiency. El Kafas refers to some reasons behind singlehood in Egypt, such as the economic reasons which lead to the increase in the age of both males and females. He also points out that some cultural heritage which are inherited in the society that, on the one hand, if a woman does not marry to a supposed age; therefore, people may assume that she will not marry or even she herself views that. On the other hand, males constantly seek to marry females in a particular age, that is to say, that even if the man's age is in the mid-thirties or forties, he still seeks a girl at the beginning of her twenties. This is also due to a wrong inherited cultural heritage which indicate that there is a certain age that a female can give birth to healthy children. He emphasizes that this is scientifically incorrect because a woman can give birth to children until she reaches the menopause age.

El Kafas highlights some wrong perceptions that are inherited in the Egyptian society, such as women are the ones who get older quicker than men, and this has no scientific significance. He states that health is mainly depends on genes and on life style. He refers to the double standard perception of the society towards a man who does not want to marry, as a person who wants to live his life and be free and released, while when it comes to women, the same society will consider the woman who lives alone as a bad woman with bad behavior, manners, and reputation. Although the crime, adultery, is the same and religions prohibit it for both, the society accepts the man to have previous experiences (sexual experiences), and on the contrary, the same society is the one which evaluate that woman should not pass through the same sexual experience because that means she is unrespectable. He adds that the main problem is that the society is a masculine society that opposes women; therefore, the main reason for spinsterhood is that the culture does not encourage woman to feel the sense of the self or to feel she is independent, instead the culture force her to feel she cannot be independent on the contrary of

the man. In other words, the society impose a kind of trusteeship or guardianship or more protection on women.

According to the role of the media, El Kafas does not believe that the media play their role sufficiently to solve the issue. He believes that the media as a mirror for the culture of the society depict single women in drama as a desperate, complicated, or spiteful. The drama always depicts single women in a negative frame, instead of depicting that life is choice, that perhaps the female, who did not marry, is very successful, and that singlehood does not mean she is less than her resemblances who married.

4.1.3.2 Media Persons

Moataz El Demerdash, an anchor in EL Mahwar Channel, (Personal Interview, April 19th, 2007) states that the Egyptian society is a conservative society that can not apply what is spreading in other Western societies. He highlights that the only way to correct the image of single women who are titled as "*Awanas*" is through presenting positive and successful models of them in the media, art, drama, and in everything because it is not her fault, but that is a result of a social circumstances. Depending on the religious men's accusations (in the previous in-depth interviews) that the media is depicting single women as spinsters, he adds if the religious men blame the media for that then the media should reconsider the directions of the representation of single woman and depict her positively. However, he himself sees that the media did not distort the image of single woman in the society. "I myself laugh on that as it is considered in a comic frame, and comedy is offering me entertainment, which is one of the functions of media, however, on the personal level, it does not change my opinion about the spinster at all. He adds that this issue is not separated from the general issue of furthering the women's role in parliament, ministries, local councils, and media. That is why, "I seek in my program the presence of women and always focus on the participation of woman, and I agree that woman does not take her right at all, not only in the media, and not as anchors, but generally speaking in the whole society." According to the solution, the whole society with all its groups and categories should move towards this direction; that is to say that man should take decisions and insist to change the role of woman. According to the spinsterhood problem, he believes that the culture of the society should change and the media play a role in that. Not only spinsters, but also there are other stereotypical images in the society which discriminate certain groups.

In another interview with Marwa Sallam, a female former anchor in AL Nas Channel, and recently an anchor in ABC Arabic Economic Channel (Personal interview, April 19th, 2007), she sees that a single woman who is strong and believe in Allah's fate should not be affected by the term spinster (*anas*) at all. She adds that the society should change their notions and people should care for each other. We can focus on the positive side of a single woman that she is a professor, anchor, and a teacher. Sallam points out that the media, as a mirror of the society and culture, enhance that image. "People take everything from the media. For instance, if I kept watching a character for around 20 years as the media depict the single woman with messy hair and specific appearance, idiot, with all bad characteristics, and all people laugh on her; therefore, forcefully, in the unconscious, once the word *anas* is mentioned, this certain depicted image will stick to my mind. "Therefore, definitely, the media play a strong role in cultivating this image" (Sallam).

According to their role as anchors, the solution, as she see, is through presenting positive images from the society for single women who reach the age maturity and who are successful in their life. We should focus on the positive points. There is a good percent of single women in the urban area who are starting to think well and are not in a rush any more to marry because they think that being unmarried is better than being divorced even if they took the title *anas*. However, according to the rural area, it is totally different because once the girl is 16 years, her

parents start to worry that she did not marry. Sallam adds that the rural areas are much affected by the media; therefore, she sees that the solution should be mainly through the drama and then the programs.

Sallam points out that the problem of spinsterhood is not only an economic problem, but mainly it is a moral problem, "if everything is available now for the man, why should he go and tired himself with marriage and its burdens." So she sees that the main reason is that people mainly do not fear Allah, and secondly is the economic reasons. However, if people fear Allah, they will facilitate marriage and the youth instead of committing adultery, they will marry. Also there is no patience, from the woman's side, to wait and start from the beginning with a partner. Another point that affect that issue is the video clips, as they have negative effects, every man is dreaming to have the body of a celebrity such as Haifaa Wahby at home; however, there is also double standard for if the man finds this girl, he will not marry her. The Arab male has double standard mentality in this issue, he will marry someone like his mum or sister, but he always feels that he miss something, and that is why, this pushes him to betray his wife and commit adultery. She also refers to the state of non confidence or no trust that occurs recently between men and women.

4.1.4 Cinema Directors and Critics

Fawzy Soliman, a cinema senior critic (Personal Communication, February 14, 2007) stresses on the main role of the cultural heritage in distorting the image of single woman, and how Eastern societies differ from the Western ones. The Western countries do not focus on the spinsterhood issue or convinced with; the age of marriage in the West differs from that in the East because in the Arab and Islamic World, the traditions impose on the girl to marry early. Soliman emphasizes that this phenomenon exists not only in the Islamic/Arab World, but in what is called the Third World, for example India, as young girls, there, are forced to marry old men. Then, their husbands die, leave them alone. By losing their husbands (their protectors), women face problems. He adds that the media play an important role in cultivating an ugly image in the mind of audience in relation to the single woman.

Mohamed Abu El Hassen, theater director (Personal Interview, March 1, 2005), states, "when I hear the word *anas*, immediately, it comes to my mind the actress Malek El Gamal in the Egyptian Movie *EL Shomoa El Sawdaa* "The black Candles", although she was secretly married in the movie." He adds, "actually we, as drama makers, did not remedy this spinsterhood or *onousa* problem. We did nothing. We did not tackle this issue absolutely, and we, when, tackle, it, always in a comic frame." (translike) He adds that even the theater did not tackle this issue. He admits, concerning spinsterhood issue, that they, as drama makers, did not do their duty properly, and he highlights "the absence of drama remediation for this issue on the theater, as most plays, which are shown on the theater, talking even about women's problems, are very few because the man was always the spotlight and the center of attention. He relates the problem to socio-economic circumstances. Abu El Hassen states that the society in general and the media in particular still view the single woman as a spinster or *anas*, although she has been educated, and she is working like man in the society, and he adds that this the image should be changed, and we should tackle it socially and economically, and not just demonstrate her image in a comic form. "We should be honest, and tackle it as a problem." (translike) However, Abu El Hassen mentions that even the women writers did not do that and "I think they also did not do their duty properly concerning that issue."

Abu El Hassen also points out that the theater starts now to tackle issues like *Urfa* Marriage and Streets' Children, for he says, "We are now discussing and trying to remedy the results; however, we left the cause or the base, that is the problem of past age without marriage. So if we want to remedy, first of all, we should go far away from the comic frame because that issue is not the one to be remedied in a comic form. We should not depict the woman as the reason,

as we usually do, but we should remedy the reasons behind her stay unmarried until that age." He adds that the term spinster or *anas* is a cursing word, and "if I describe any woman by it that means that I am cursing her or joking on her. I never hear that word except in a comic frame."

According to Hala Galal, a female cinema director (Personal interview, March 1, 2007) she states that she is not convinced with the presence of this word, and the girl is not restricted to it. She adds that her sister who did not married except at the age of 38 years no one could label her as that because it is her own choice.

According to Maged Habashy (Telephone Interview, November 24, 2007), the media tackles the issue from three different scopes. They either tackle the issue in a comic frame that did not remedy the problem, tackle it as social case that is crucial within the society and they expose it to the society to look for a solution and this is the role of the media, or even the media did not tackle it either positively or negatively. Unfortunately, the movies which tackle the problem in a comic way is the one which affect the society greater, and even when the movies tackle this problem positively never tackle it as an exclusive problem but within the context of other social problems such as *Bedayia We Nehayia* and *Ahl El Kema*. He adds that this problem is related to political, economic, social, cultural, and ideological reasons. The media did not practice any role to solve the problem they only expose it. He adds, "I myself reject this word and that concept. Why should I pressure the woman to marry, we should grant her freedom for choice. He relates the reason of the social pressure for the cultural heritage which is mainly the cause for pressuring women especially Islam which insists on the importance of marriage that "marriage is half the religion". He states that this is the reason for this problem which exists in Arab Islamic countries however, this notion does not exist outside.

Khaled Gamal, a cinema director, (Personal Communication, May 21, 2007) asserts that the image of *anas* constantly appear as a minor character, and that she has a certain deficiency that makes people cannot sympathize with her. Gamal emphasizes the role of culture in labeling single woman as a spinster; however, he states that he himself can not depict the spinster as a successful person in society. Comedy is always connected with the bizarre going far from the common, and the spinster is characterized by being unusual. If a man reaches any age, even in his seventies, he can marry. However, a woman can not if she exceeds a certain period, the age of maturity, and she will be labeled as spinster, for she has failed to accomplish her duty in the society. Thus, the role of drama is to focus on any deficiency.

Appendix 4.2 List of Contact of Interviewees

Media & Journalists:	Title & Place	Contact
H.E. Amb. Ayman El Kafas	Chairman of the State Information Service, Ministry of Information, El Estad El Bahari St., From Salah Salem St., Nasr City, Cairo, Egypt.	002.02.2605779
Mr Moataz El Demerdash	Reporter and anchor in the Egyptian TV, and in El Mehwar Channel.	002.010.219.5589
Ms. Marwa Sallam	Former anchor in <i>El Nas</i> Channel "People's Channel", and recently an anchor in ABC Arabic Economic Channel	002.010.662.1942
Cinema & Theater persons:		
Mr. Maged Habashy	Cinema Director	002.010.124.8404
Mr. Mohamed Abu El Hassen	Independent Theater Director	002.012.335.0890
Mrs. Hala Galal	Cinema Director, and Manager of SEMAT for Independent Cinema Directors for Production and Distribution.	002.012.783.8387
Mr. Khaled Gamal	Cinema Director, and TV director in the Educational Channel.	002.010.142.2961
Mr. Fawzy Soliman	Cinema Senior Critic, Former Cinema Critic at EL Goumhuria Newspaper	002.012.467.2672
Religious Men:		
Sheikh Ali Hafez	Fatma El Zahraa Mosque, El Dokki, Giza, Egypt	002.010.859.4502
Bishop Joseph Sarraf Bishop of the Chaldeans in Egypt (Catholic)	Saint Fatima Church, Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt	002.010.1594449
Priest Yonan Samir Wengt (Orthodox)	Marry Morkos Church, Maadi Area, Egypt	002.012.225.9899
Psychiatrist and Sociologists:		
Dr. Nashae Nabil Said	El Hayat Hospital, Ibn Sendar Square, Cairo, Egypt	002.012.717.8783

Appendix 5

Appendix 5.1

Table 5.1.C Frequencies & Percentages on participants' opinions to some factors that lead to spinsterhood or *Onousa.**

Factors that lead to Spinsterhood	<u>n</u>	%	Ranking
Personal Factors			
a. Men do not want to marry	18	5.5	8
b. Girls do not want to marry	19	5.8	7
c. Lack of appropriate matching between males and females	79	24.2	1
d. Woman's work	15	4.6	9
e. Ugly Appearance/ behavior	26	8	6
f. Bad manners and Reputation of Girls	41	12.6	3
g. All the Above	72	22.1	2
h. No Reason	40	12.3	4
i. Others	32	9.8	5
Psychological Factors			
a. A woman not married because of her loyalty to her lover	13	4	6
b. A woman failed in a love relation refusing to experience another	63	19.3	3
	67	20.6	2
c. No Psychological emotional comfort between both	42	12.9	4
d. The fear from handling marriage responsibilities	93	28.5	1
e. All the Above	24	7.4	5
f. Others			
Economic Factors			
Youth do not have money to marry	56	17.2	3
Exaggeration in Dowry	35	10.7	4
Unemployment	64	19.6	2
All the Above	164	50.3	1
No Reason	16	4.9	5
Others	6	1.8	6
Biological Factors			
The Inability to get pregnant	34	10.4	3
Giving birth to a Mongolian/Disabled Child	15	4.6	6
Difficulty in having Sexual Intercourse	28	8.6	4
The First & The Second	23	7.1	5
All the Above	60	18.4	2
No Reason	136	41.7	1
Others	-	-	-
Social Factors			
a. The Family rejects the son to marry from them	37	11.3	5
b. The man rejects to marry from them	32	9.8	6
c. The Society rejects the man to marry from them	10	3.1	7
d. The Social Low Esteem view of the spinster or Anas	55	16.9	2
e. A man leaves a girl after he spent a time with her (either as a fiancé or a relation)	46	14.1	4
f. All the Above	88	27	1
g. No Reason	48	14.7	3
h. Others	6	1.8	8

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

(Table 5.1.C continues)

Factors that lead to Spinsterhood	n	%	Ranking
Religious Factors			
Prohibition of Mixing	36	11	3
Prohibition of any relation except marriage	83	25.5	1
Essentiality of Marriage	61	18.7	2
The Spinster or <i>Anas</i> is religiously hated	5	1.5	6
All the Above	21	6.4	4
No Reason	83	25.5	1
Others	15	4.6	5

* multiple choice answers are permitted.

Appendix 5.2

Table 5.h Frequency and Percentages on Participants' Perception of the image of woman titled as Spinster or *Anas* in the Egyptian Media especially Drama (Movies)

Participants' Perception of representation of Woman titled as Spinster or <i>Anas</i> in movies	<u>n</u>	%
Negative/Positive		
Negative	176	72.1
Neutral	26	10.7
Positive	42	17.2
Total	244	100.0
Ugly/Beautiful		
Ugly	149	61.3
Neutral	41	16.9
Beautiful	53	21.8
Total	243	100.0
Unobjective/Objective		
Unobjective	149	62.9
Neutral	37	15.6
Objective	51	21.5
Total	237	100.0
Uncredible/credible		
Uncredible	141	58.7
Neutral	36	15.0
credible	63	26.3
Total	240	100.0
Unlovable/ Lovable		
Unlovable	152	63.0
Neutral	32	13.3
Lovable	57	23.7
Total	241	100.0
Sarcastic/Serious		
Sarcastic	151	61.9
Neutral	34	13.9
Serious	59	24.2
Total	244	100.0
Unrealistic/Realistic		
Unrealistic	137	56.1
Neutral	31	12.7
Realistic	76	31.1
Total	244	100.0

Appendix 5.3

Table 5.1.P.1 Participants' Knowledge of actresses.

Knowing the actress	<u>n</u>	%
Soad Hosni	272	83.4
Zenat Sedky	262	80.4
Malek EL Gamal	122	37.4
Soheer El Baroony	178	54.6
Soheer El Morshedy	213	65.3
Yusra	262	80.4
Mevat Amin	257	78.8
Khairia Ahmed	253	77.6
Zezy El Badrawy	223	68.4
Mary Monib	241	73.9
Nabila El Sayed	192	58.9
Sanaa Gamil	242	74.2
Nagma Ibrahim	157	48.2
Aziza Helmi	125	38.3
Laila Fawzy	217	66.6
Hala Fakher	238	73.0
Bosi	254	77.9
Faten Hamama	255	78.2
Lola Sedky	110	33.7
Akeela Rateb	170	52.1
Esaad Yunis	228	69.9
Nadia El Nokrashy	52	16.0
Dawlat Bayomi	52	16.0
Sanaa Yunis	229	70.2
Shadia	262	80.4

Appendix 5.4

Table 5.1.P.2 Participants' Opinion about whether the Actress acted the role of Spinster or *Anas* in the Cinema or not.

Acted a Spinster role	<u>n</u>	%
Soad Hosni		
Acted as Spinster	27	9.9
Did not act as Spinster	230	84.6
No Answer	15	5.5
Total	272	100.0
Zenat Sedky		
Acted as Spinster	227	86.6
Did not act as Spinster	19	7.3
No Answer	16	6.1
Total	262	100.0
Malak EL Gamal		
Acted as Spinster	87	71.3
Did not act as Spinster	23	18.9
No Answer	12	9.8
Total	122	100.0
Soheer El Baroony		
Acted as Spinster	115	64.6
Did not act as Spinster	53	29.8
No Answer	10	5.6
Total	122	100.0
Soheer El Morshedy		
Acted as Spinster	69	32.4
Did not act as Spinster	129	60.6
No Answer	15	7.0
Total	213	100.0
Yusra		
Acted as Spinster	34	13.0
Did not act as Spinster	216	82.4
No Answer	12	4.6
Total	262	100.0
Mevat Amin		
Acted as Spinster	23	8.9
Did not act as Spinster	223	86.8
No Answer	11	4.3
Total	257	100.0
Khairia Ahmed		
Acted as Spinster	187	73.9
Did not act as Spinster	56	22.1
No Answer	10	4.0
Total	253	100.0

(Table 5.1.P.2 continues)

Zezy El Badrawy		
Acted as Spinster	54	24.2
Did not act as Spinster	157	70.4
No Answer	12	5.4
Total	223	100.0
Mary Monib		
Acted as Spinster	180	74.7
Did not act as Spinster	48	19.9
No Answer	13	5.4
Total	241	100.0
Nabila El Sayed		
Acted as Spinster	137	71.4
Did not act as Spinster	44	22.9
No Answer	11	5.7
Total	192	100.0
Sanaa Gamil		
Acted as Spinster	165	68.2
Did not act as Spinster	64	26.4
No Answer	13	5.4
Total	242	100.0
Nagma Ibrahim		
Acted as Spinster	87	55.4
Did not act as Spinster	57	36.3
No Answer	13	8.3
Total	157	100.0
Aziza Helmi		
a. Acted as Spinster	57	45.6
b. Did not act as Spinster	53	42.2
c. No Answer	15	12.0
Total	125	100.0
Laila Fawzy		
Acted as Spinster	37	17.1
Did not act as Spinster	165	76.0
No Answer	15	6.9
Total	217	100.0
Hala Fakher		
Acted as Spinster	133	55.9
Did not act as Spinster	93	39.1
No Answer	12	5.0
Total	157	100.0
Faten Hamama		
Acted as Spinster	28	11.0
Did not act as Spinster	213	83.5
No Answer	14	5.5
Total	255	100.0

(Table 5.1.P.2 continues)

Lola Sedky		
Acted as Spinster	39	35.5
Did not act as Spinster	57	51.8
No Answer	14	12.7
Total	110	100.0
Akeela Rateb		
Acted as Spinster	90	52.9
Did not act as Spinster	67	39.4
No Answer	13	7.6
Total	170	100.0
Esaad Yunis		
Acted as Spinster	145	63.6
Did not act as Spinster	64	28.1
No Answer	19	8.3
Total	228	100.0
Nadia El Nokrashy		
Acted as Spinster	19	36.5
Did not act as Spinster	22	42.3
No Answer	11	21.2
Total	52	100.0
Dawlat Bayomi		
a. Acted as Spinster	23	44.2
b. Did not act as Spinster	17	32.7
c. No Answer	12	23.1
Total	52	100.0
Sanaa Yunis		
Acted as Spinster	200	87.3
Did not act as Spinster	17	7.4
No Answer	12	5.2
Total	229	100.0
Shadia		
Acted as Spinster	29	11.1
Did not act as Spinster	215	82.1
No Answer	18	6.9
Total	262	100.0